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Alexander the Great: an analysis of the Burgundian and the Timurid manuscripts

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ALEXANDER THE GREAT:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE BURGUNDIAN AND THE TIMURID
MANUSCRIPTS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Art & Design

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Durriya Tyabji

December 2003

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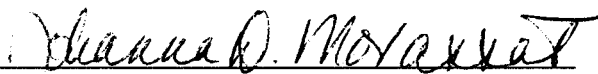
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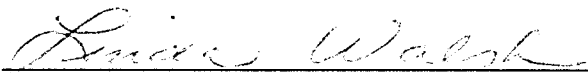
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ABSTRACT

ALEXANDER THE GREAT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE BURGUNDIAN AND THE TIMURID MANUSCRIPTS

By Durriya Tyabji

This thesis examines the fifteenth-century Burgundian and Timurid manuscripts of Alexander taking the interdisciplinary approach. It investigates the economical, cultural, political, and historical viewpoints along with the art history perspective. It investigates the ancient sources from which the history of Alexander was derived and reviews the fifteenth-century political and economical environments that influenced the secular art of both cultures.

It explores numerous illustrative styles of page schematics, marginalia and frontispieces and examines their visual vocabulary. It surveys the artistic characteristics of the Burgundian manuscripts and analyses the illuminations from the Ludwig XV 8 manuscript. It discusses the importance of the *kitabkhana* and its influence on Timurid art and how the *kitabkhana* was instrumental in furthering the political agenda of Timurid princes. It studies the illustrative campaigns of Shahnama and Khamsa, tracing the development of various Timurid schools. Furthermore, the thesis compares and contrasts various aspects of the Burgundian and Timurid viewpoints.

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شكراً
Thank you

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INTRODUCTION

In the fifteenth century every educated person in the Western world was familiar with the legends of Alexander the Great, the son of Philip II of Macedon and Olympias of Epirus (d. 323 B.C.E.).¹ These tales served as great motivation for personal heroics,² strength of character,³ as well as personal generosity.⁴ In the Islamic world, the legends of Alexander were also very popular and Alexander was adopted as a Persian prince,⁵ mighty king,⁶ great warrior,⁷ a Muslim,⁸ and a sage,⁹ whereas in Europe, Christian writers made Alexander a Christian.¹⁰ Each civilization embraced Alexander according to its belief system and culture, and transformed his persona to suit its own purpose.

For my thesis I will examine the material contents of the Burgundian manuscript of *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant*, "The Deeds of Alexander the Great" by Vasco da Lucena¹¹ and in particular the Getty manuscript, *The History of Alexander the Great*, and other similar manuscripts concerning the history of Alexander from the fifteenth century under four Burgundian dukes. I will also examine the *Shahnama*¹² and the *Khamisa* of Nizami¹³ from the fifteenth century Iran under the Timurid dynasty. I will take an interdisciplinary approach for my thesis and compare both the Burgundian as well as the Timurid manuscripts from many scholarly fields.

Edward Robinson, professor of art history at Harvard University, described the study of art as "the most liberating of the liberal studies." In his address to the College Art Association of America in 1918, he praised his professor at Harvard University, Charles Eliot Norton, for expounding the arts as, "the expression of [the] civilization that produced them [art] . . . history,

languages, literature, philosophy - all seem to have a bearing upon what he was teaching."¹⁴

Prolific writer and professor at Harvard, Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), and other scholars expanded their horizons favoring a broader approach to art history.¹⁵ The study of art history extended beyond the sphere of works of art to become the study of "Visual Culture,"¹⁶ and "the image" became interrelated with social, political, and cultural history. The concepts of "Interdisciplinary Studies" and "Visual Culture" are not contemporary buzzwords: these paradigms were just as popular in the early twentieth century. It is not an innovative philosophy but an old idea that emphasizes the interdisciplinary approach in education. As a student of art history I firmly believe in interdisciplinary studies, just as most art historians do. The fruitful exchange of information between scholarly fields is crucial and it should be encouraged.

The heated debate is not whether exchange should take place but with whom, in what form, and how much.¹⁷ The concern is, are we sacrificing the narrow yet expert connoisseurship in favor of the broader multi-disciplinary approach? In the last two decades new awareness in social, political, and cultural history of art has produced many articles emphasizing the importance of multi-disciplinary education. Therefore, keeping the above concerns in mind, I will undertake the multidisciplinary approach of shared intellectual values¹⁸ by combining social sciences, cultural history, and literature for my thesis.¹⁹ To fully understand both the Burgundian as well as the Timurid manuscripts, I feel it is imperative to examine the influences of non-visual materials such as

history along with cross-cultural evaluation, economic climate, and political rhetoric of fifteenth-century.

The first chapter will outline the historical legacy of Alexander and summarize the historical sources from which the Burgundians as well as the Persians acquired their knowledge of Alexander. Included in this chapter is a discussion of the perception of the great warrior in the Western as well as in the Islamic worlds as documented in late medieval manuscripts. It will also examine if *Historiae Alexandri Magni* (written by Quintus Curtius Rufus of uncertain date)²⁰ influence the nobility to assert their aristocratic Burgundian pride, opening new horizons. Finally, how the Timurids exploited the image of Alexander to suit their own purpose.

The second chapter will review the economic, cultural, and political climates of Burgundy and Iran in the fifteenth century. It will elaborate on how political stability and economic prosperity in Burgundy helped in the development of secular art, as well as in the production of illuminated manuscripts such as the historical books of Alexander. In addition, there will be an examination of how the Timurids used the *Shahnama* and the *Khamisa* as propagandistic tools to establish their own political agenda, which lead to economic prosperity and help the Timurids achieve political stability and cultural pluralism.

The third chapter will explore the visual aspects of the page schematics, marginalia designs, and frontispieces of both the Burgundian as well as the Timurid manuscripts. It will examine *mise-en-page*, the characteristic layout of a manuscript, as well as external influences (Netherlandish, Flemish, French,

and Chinese) that inspired the marginalia designs of the Burgundian and the Timurid manuscripts. The Timurid section will discuss the importance of *kitabkhana* (Royal scriptorium and Atelier) and how this fraternity helped to create a uniform visual vocabulary, while at the same time allowing artists to exhibit immense diversity in their decorative ornamentation. In addition, it will elaborate on the inventiveness of Timurid artists, and their ability to synthesize Chinese characteristics into their own Turco-Mongol forms, and create a new vocabulary that was uniquely Iranian in style.

Chapter Four A will discuss the artistic characteristics of the Getty manuscript, *The History of Alexander the Great* by Vasco de Lucena, and analyze all fourteen plates of illuminations. Furthermore it will evaluate the aesthetic influences and the parallels between Getty illuminations and other Vasco illuminations. Chapter Four B will discuss the illustrative campaign of the *Shahnama* and *Khamza*. It also will discuss the Jalayrid heritage that gave birth to the Timurid style and how this classical style was expanded under each Timurid Sultans until it reached its zenith under the influence of Bihzad at the Herat school.

In conclusion, it is evident that to address these complex issues I will need to have fruitful exchange with many scholarly fields so that I can successfully compare both the Burgundian as well as the Timurid manuscripts. The fifteenth century was the transitory period between the late medieval attitudes and the beginning of the Renaissance perceptive. In the French prose the stories of Alexander were remarkably popular and manuscripts of Alexander were highly prized in Burgundy around this time.²¹

Two great epics, the *Shahnama* and the *Khamsa*, also were sought after literature of the Timurid dynasty in Iran in the fifteenth century. Both cultures promoted the manuscripts of Alexander, hence, my thesis will explore the similarities as well as the differences between the Burgundian and the Timurid manuscripts form many scholarly fields.

¹ David John Athole Ross, *Alexander Historiatus: A Guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature*, 2nd ed. (Frankfort am Main: Athenaum, 1988), 1-4.

² For example, see Scot McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great: an Illuminated Manuscript of Vasco da Lucena's French Translation of the Ancient Text by Quintus Curtius Rufus* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996), Plate 4: *Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre*. Plate 12: *Alexander Fights with a Lion and Kills Clitus*. Alexander is personified as Hercules fighting the Nemean Lion, which emphasized his personal strength and bravery; Plate 13: *Alexander Fights in the Town of the Sudracae*. Alexander jumps into enemy attack with his back protected by a large tree, fights off the Indian soldiers.

³ McKendrick, *History of Alexander the Great*, Plate 3: *Alexander's Illness at the Cydnus River and the Death of Sisinnus*. Alexander shows courage and strength of character by not believing Parmenion's rumors warning him against Philip, and takes medicine from Philip.

⁴ McKendrick, *History of Alexander the Great*, Plate 5: *The Competition in Sittacene and the Placating of Sisigambis*. Alexander's gracious treatment of Darius' family immediately after Darius' defeat is well known; Plate 6: *Alexander and the Niece of Artaxerxes III*. His noble treatment of the niece of Artaxerxes and similar respect for other noble Persians, including Darius' family, in 330 B.C.E. reveal not only strength of character but also personal generosity.

⁵ *Iskandar Begegnung dem Kaiser von China. Shahnama*. Scribe Mahumud al-Huseini for Timurid prince Baysunghur, Herat, 1420. Berlin, Bilderhefte der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, Hs. s. 916; *Iskandar leaves in search of the Water of Life*. St. Petersburg, Russia, ca. 1430s. 24.5 x 21.7 cm. Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Fol.388r.

⁶ *Alexander Enthroned. Great Mongol Shahnama*. ca. 14th century. Paris, Louvre, Inv. 7096. 164r, verses 1-46.

⁷ *Alexander Battling the Fur of Hind. Great Mongol Shahnama*. ca. 14th century. 167v, verses 554-78; *Alexander and his Warriors Fighting a Dragon. Great Mongol Shahnama*. ca. 14th century. 172v, verses 1183-1221.

⁸ *View of Mecca with the Holy Place and the Ka'ba. Anthology of Iskandar Sultan*. Shiraz, 1410-1411. 6 1/8 x 3 7/8 in. London, British Museum, Add. 27 261. Fol.s 362v and 363r.

⁹ *Iskandar and the Seven Sages. Khamsa of Nizami*. Probably work of Bihzad. Herat, 1494-95. London, British Library; *Khidr and Ilyas Brought News to Alexander that God had Given Him Power Over the Wind, the Fire, the Water, and All Animals. Khamsa of Nizami*. London, Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society, MS 146a. Fol.311a.

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- ¹⁰ *Alexander's ascent into Heaven*. Carved on column capitals in medieval churches across Europe.
- ¹¹ McKendrick, *History of Alexander the Great*, also refer to Appendix 1.
- ¹² Appendix 2.
- ¹³ Appendix 3.
- ¹⁴ Edward Robinson, "The Value of the Study of Art to Students in Colleges and Universities," *Art Bulletin* IV, no. 3 (1918): 98.
- ¹⁵ Erwin Panofsky, "Three Decades of Art History in the United States: Impressions of a Transplanted European," in *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 321-46. This article was first published as "The History of Art," in *The Cultural Migration: The European Scholar in America*, ed. W. Rex Crawford (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953), 82-111.
- ¹⁶ W.J.T. Mitchell, "A Range of Critical Perspectives Inter/disciplinarity: Interdisciplinarity and Visual Culture," *Art Bulletin* LXXVII, no.4 (1995): 540-43; Mitchell, "The Pictorial Turn," *Artforum* XXX (Mar. 1992): 89-92; Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts: Papers in and on Art History* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955), 11-14.
- ¹⁷ James D. Herbert, "A Range of Critical Perspectives Inter/disciplinarity: Masterdisciplinarity and the Pictorial Turn," *Art Bulletin* LXXVII, no. 4 (1995): 537.
- ¹⁸ Thomas F. Reese, "A Range of Critical Perspectives Inter/disciplinarity: Mapping Interdisciplinarity," *Art Bulletin* LXXVII, no.4 (1995): 544-45.
- ¹⁹ Among many sources, I was particularly influenced by Patrick Brantlinger, *Crusoe's Footprint: Cultural Studies in Great Britain and America* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 27.
- ²⁰ It is speculated that it was written between three hundred to five hundred years after Alexander's death. More detailed explanation is given in Chapter # 1. Also for more information see George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1967), 1, 16-17.
- ²¹ David John Athole Ross, *Studies in the Alexander Romance* (London: The Pindar Press, 1985), 195.

CHAPTER 1

THE HISTORICAL LEGACY

One reads about the legacy of the great Frankish king Charlemagne whose military conquests changed the map of Europe in the ninth century, or the heroics of the Roman general Julius Caesar, or Genghis Khan, the supreme commander of the Mongols in China who left his footprints in the sands of the eastern empires; yet nobody has come close to the magnificence of Alexander. [Map 1] Alexander led what is said to be the longest military campaign in history, greater than any of Napoleon or Hitler. In a little more than a decade, he expanded his empire across Greece, through Asia Minor and Mesopotamia, into Iran and parts of Afghanistan and India, spreading Hellenistic culture over two million square miles. His heroic tales were retold in literature, prose as well as poetry and in illustrated manuscripts by both cultures of the East as well as the West.

Because of Alexander's great military successes many of his well-known contemporaries and associates documented his adventures. Such contemporaries include Ptolemy, the king of Egypt; Nearchus of Loto, Alexander's fleet commander; Aristobulus, a Greek engineer; and Chares of Mitylene. Callisthenes of Olynthus, a nephew of Aristotle, composed the official eyewitness history of Alexander's military campaigns in Asia from 335 B.C.E. until he was executed by Alexander on the charge of conspiracy in 327 B.C.E. Soon after Alexander's death in 323 B.C.E. Cleitarchus, a Greek who resided in Alexandria and the son of the prominent historian Dinon compiled one of the

most influential accounts of Alexander's life. Unfortunately, only a few fragments of his narrative have survived.

Western authors trace the historical accounts of Alexander from two major sources: (1) Pseudo-Callisthenes and (2) Historical accounts of Alexander translated from the ancient vulgate authors.¹ In early medieval period most of Alexander's stories were based on the Romantic genre related to the Pseudo-Callisthenes,² written between the third and second century B.C.E. to the third century C.E.,³ not until the fifteenth century did the historical accounts of Alexander become popular. According to Ross, it was rewritten and expanded several times in Antiquity (Roman Period),⁴ and henceforth translated from Greek into Latin first by Julius Valerius *Res Gestae Alexandri Macedonis* (ca. 300) and later by Leo, the Archpresbyter of Naples *Natiuitas et Victiria Alexandri Magni* (ca. 950).⁵ Over the period of five to seven hundred years, in the middle ages, according to Stoneman, these Greek Romances again were translated into every major language including English, Scottish, French, German, Swedish, Italian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Rumanian, Czech, Polish, Russian, Magyar, Spanish, Arabic, and Hebrew.⁶ These stories of Alexander were based on the synthesis of historical facts as well as imaginative fiction⁷ and became the root of many romantic vernacular stories of western culture.⁸

By the fifteenth century, historical accounts of Alexander became popular from the translated history⁹ of ancient vulgate authors such as Diodorus of Sicily (ca. 60-30 B.C.E.), Pompeius Trogus¹⁰ (ca. 27-14 B.C.E.), Plutarch (ca. Early second century), Arrian¹¹ (First half of the second

century), and Quintus Curtius Rufus¹² rather of Pseudo-Callisthenes,¹³ though recent research suggests that few of these authors, especially Curtius, may have drawn partial accounts from the Greek Romances known as Pseudo-Callisthenes.¹⁴ Although these ancient vulgate authors compiled their historical accounts of Alexander between three hundred to five hundred years after Alexander's death,¹⁵ they seem to have drawn their information from the earlier literary accounts mentioned above.¹⁶ With the exception of Arrian and Plutarch, the other three so-called vulgate authors, — Diodorus, Trogus/Justin¹⁷ and Curtius drew their information primarily from Cleitarchus' historical accounts, thus indirectly preserving the lost fragments of his *Historiae*.¹⁸ It is this last Cleitarchus' text on which some of our knowledge of Alexander is based.¹⁹

The manuscripts of the *Historiae Alexandri Magni* have several large lacunae and thus have not survived intact. These manuscripts of *Historiae Alexandri Magni* are divided into ten books out of which first and second books are missing and other surviving books have partial text missing in books 5, 6, and 10.²⁰ These fragmentary texts, chronicle the time from Alexander's arrival in Phrygia (333 B.C.E.) to his death in Babylon at the age of 32 (323 B.C.E.).²¹

Much scholarly research has been done by many historians, trying to establish the sources for Curtius' *Historiae Alexandri Magni* (see Appendix A). After extensive research Hammond, a fellow of Clare College, Cambridge University suggests that beside Cleitarchus, Curtius also used the writings of Aristobulus,²² Hegesias (third century B.C.E.), Diyllus (after 323 B.C.E.),

Onesicratus (ca. 330 B.C.E.),²³ and Chares²⁴ as sources for his *Historiae*.²⁵ According to Hammond, Curtius' writing also indicates that he had vast knowledge of Latin literature from both the Augustan and post-Augustan periods and Curtius used Cleitarchus as his main source and Hegesias as his secondary source for his third book.²⁶ However, Atkinson suggests Curtius used Cleitarchus, Timagenes (ca. second and first century B.C.E.), and Ptolemy as his sources especially for his books three and four.²⁷

For his ninth book, Curtius seems to have used the same common sources as Diodorus.²⁸ For the tenth book, Curtius has added his own suppositions so it is difficult to ascertain his exact sources except to say that he has not used Ptolemy and Aristobulus's writings.²⁹ Hammond states that Curtius treated his source material with considerable freedom and produced speeches and conversations of Alexander to express his own view.³⁰ In fact many of his passages contain fictionalized events to sensationalize the episodes. To these passages Curtius has added contemporary Roman ideals that echoed Roman life and literature, and also slightly reshaped the events to fit his agenda.³¹ Atkinson agrees with Hammond and further states that Curtius contributed to the development of the myth and mystique of Alexander, while leaving out many parts that he considered irrelevant.³² In the later part of this thesis one will discover that this is also true of some Persian³³ writers; they have gone beyond known history and altered many facts and events to fit their agendas.

Curtius' text offers a multi-faceted character of Alexander which differs from Arrian's historical accounts in which Alexander is shown

exclusively in a positive light. Curtius portrays Alexander as a fierce hero, kind and generous, yet at the same time having many weaknesses especially a tendency towards anger, violence, and excessive drinking. He presents Alexander as a great man with a complex character, and at the same time talks of his cruelty and gradual moral decline. In that sense his text is full of medieval rhetoric: conflicts between good and evil, nature and fortune.³⁴

It is difficult to ascertain when Quintus Curtius Rufus wrote the *Historiae Alexandri Magni*. Various dates have been suggested by scholars³⁵ spanning over 12 Roman emperors, from Augustus to Constantine the Great, between 25 B.C.E. (Korzeniewski)³⁶ to the fourth century. According to Ross two references in Curtius' text suggest it could have been written under the emperor Claudius (41-54)³⁷ or Vaspasian (69-79). Hence the time frame of *Historiae* being written around the first century is accepted by some contemporary scholars.³⁸

Interest in Curtius' historical documents of Alexander was revived in the fifteenth century, when many scholars translated the history of Alexander from the manuscripts of the ancient vulgate authors. The Portuguese and Burgundian humanist Vasco da Lucena translated the *Historiae Alexandri Magni* by Curtius into French as *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant* "The Deeds of Alexander the Great" (Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Ludwig XV 8), in 1468.³⁹ His motivation was to reestablish the truth concerning Antiquity as earlier Alexander stories were not based on historical accuracy but were closer to the fictional accounts portrayed in Greek Romances known as the Pseudo-Callisthenus.⁴⁰ Because it was

written in the local vernacular,⁴¹ *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant* became very popular in late medieval Northern Europe (ca. Fifteenth Century).⁴²

Evidence from contemporary inventories and catalogues suggests that at least forty manuscripts were produced from Vasco's translation of Quintus Curtius' *Historiae* of which thirty-four manuscripts have survived to this date [Chart 1].⁴³ These secular manuscripts of Alexander were produced mainly for the French speaking nobility of Northern Europe and were luxuriously decorated in the southern Netherlands. According to McKendrick,⁴⁴ these didactic volumes affirm Vasco's humanistic skills as a scholar, writer, and translator, becoming very popular for upper class educated contemporary readers in northern as well as southern Europe.

In Burgundy, tales of Alexander were very popular and were read widely by all strata of society such as clergy, nobility, and tradesmen. Therefore clergy as well as the nobility capitalized on Alexander's image and persona by manipulating Alexander's image to suit their own purpose. One of the most popular iconographical images of Alexander was Alexander's ascent into heaven which was portrayed in many manuscripts as well as carved on column capitals in medieval churches across Europe.⁴⁵ These stories of Alexander provided the clergy with powerful tools for Christian moralizing, scriptural commentary, and preaching.⁴⁶

Vasco's *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant* presented a non-liturgical view of Alexander where clerical dogma was conspicuously absent. Members of the European nobility, aware of their inferior status before the learned clergy, adapted Alexander's stories to shape their own destiny. Therefore they

aligned themselves with Alexander's image of an autonomous world ruler and a mighty conqueror. Furthermore, they longed to imitate Alexander's power, his brutal authority, and his fierce independence in order to undermine clerical dominance. That is why they adopted many symbolic images that related to Alexander, among these the emblem of the lion, symbolizing Alexander's courage which the Burgundians used on their shields.⁴⁷ In order to demonstrate their superiority, the nobility and royalty began to practice more elaborate court rituals to demonstrate their new acquired power which gave aristocratic society a sense of pride.⁴⁸

In the Islamic world, especially in Timurid Iran, the stories of Alexander also became an important part of the folklore. In the late fourteenth century, the Asian conqueror Timur (1338-1405), called *lang* (lame) from an injury received in a raid, and hence known in the West as Tamerlane, sought to create the same stable and progressive government that Alexander had created.⁴⁹ [Map 2] Various contemporary scholars⁵⁰ wrote great historical documentaries of Alexander, frequently elevating a contemporary ruler's status by comparing him to Alexander. They glorified the image of Alexander and justified his war against Darius III.⁵¹

In Iran two great epics retold the stories of Alexander the Great. The first epic is the *Shahnama* (Appendix A), the Book of Kings by Firdausi (ca. 1010). In the second half of the *Shahnama* the adventures of Alexander are narrated. The second epic is the *Khamasa* (Appendix B), a quintet of verses by Nizami (ca. 1270-1320). The last *masnavi* of the *Khamasa* is entitled *Iskandarmana* or the stories of Alexander.

Medieval Iranian writers based their knowledge of Alexander on three sources:

1. **THE ANCIENT VALGATE AUTHORS:** Historical accounts of the life of Alexander written by the ancient vulgate authors — Quintus Curtius Rufus, Trogus/Justin, and Orosius.
2. **THE PSEUDO-CALLISTHENUS:** Literary genre belonging to the Pseudo-Callisthenus tradition, which retained historical facts but also, gave a marvelous multifaceted dimension to Alexander's persona.
3. **THE FABULOUS ROMANCES:**⁵² where historical truth was almost obliterated and was replaced by wonderful adventures of Alexander.

1. **THE ANCIENT VALGATE AUTHORS:** Iranian authors based some of their stories of Alexander from the historical accounts written by the so-called Vulgate authors, who were very knowledgeable of Achaemenid⁵³ traditions and customs. The detailed written descriptions of elaborate Achaemenid court ceremonies and rituals, weaponry, and costumes are true to that era, and reaffirm the ancient vulgate authors' scholarship.⁵⁴ For example, in the scene from the Battle of Issus, the ancient vulgate authors were cognizant of the different weaponry used by both adversaries — Alexander's soldiers used Macedonian pikes, whereas the Achaemenid used spears. Most authors wrote about Alexander's admiration and respect for the Achaemenid Empire, and also his adoption of Achaemenid clothing, customs, and traditions. Both the ancient authors as well as the Iranian authors retold numerous stories about Alexander's marriage to Roxane, the daughter of Darius III, the powerful ruler

of the Achaemenid dynasty and also Alexander's orders to his soldiers to wed the local Achaemenid women.

The ancient vulgate authors saw Darius III in a much different light than the Iranian authors did.⁵⁵ Their judgement was colored because of their personal bias: Darius III was the enemy of Alexander. According to most Iranian authors however, Darius III was the great ruler of the Achaemenid Empire commanding vast territories, and a builder of magnificent palace. Darius III was treated with great respect and was endowed with the magnificent attributes that the ancient vulgate authors endowed Alexander.⁵⁶ Curtius' writing (ancient vulgate writer) reflected the Greek and Roman attitudes of ancient times, whereas Timurid literature reflected the fifteenth-century contemporary Timurid disposition.

2. THE PSEUDO-CALLISTHENUS:⁵⁷ The Pseudo-Callisthenus has four main branches: α , β , γ , and δ recension⁵⁸ and it is the δ recension, that became a source of Iranian writers.⁵⁹ The δ recension was also based on a partial α recension.⁶⁰

The principal derivatives of the δ recension are listed in the chronological order: [Diagram 3] (1) The Pehlevi version⁶¹ (now lost) *Namah-yi Tansar* (The Book of Tansar, from third century onwards) was based on a δ recension of Greek Manuscript of Pseudo-Callisthenus. (2) The source of (now lost) Syriac version (ca. sixth century) is traced to the Pehlevi version and also from the (lost) δ type Greek manuscript of Pseudo-Callisthenus (which was translated into Latin by the Archpriest Leo of Naples in the tenth century). (3) In the early ninth century the Syriac version was translated into Arabic by the Syrian

Christian Yuhanna ibn el-Batrik (Johannes Filius Patricii), who died in 815.⁶²

(4) The Ethiopic version (ca. fourteenth century) is derived from (now lost) Arabic version and other derivatives of the α recension. (5) In the fourteenth century Nestorian Missionaries brought the Ethiopic version to Central Asia and Ethiopic version became one of the important sources for Iranian historians and writer.⁶³

Around 950 Archpriest Leo of Naples undertook a mission to Constantinople and found a δ type Greek Manuscript of Pseudo-Callisthenus. He brought back a transcript of this manuscript and translated it into Latin entitled *Natiuitas et Victiria Alexandri Magni* for Duke John III's library and it became an important influential source for the Medieval knowledge of Alexander.⁶⁴

3. THE FABULOUS ROMANCES: According to Southgate, Pseudo-Callisthenus had been subject of numerous researches by the western writers while Pseudo- Callisthenus and Fabulous Romances in relation to Islamic sources are relative unexplored area of the scholarship. He further states, "In the East, the authors of Syriac, Ethiopic and Persian romances added new wonders to those in the Greek original" that became part of Fabulous Romance genre.⁶⁵ The *Iskandarmana* belongs to the Fabulous Romance genre that deals with the amazing fairytale accounts of Alexander.⁶⁶ Nizami's work is also somewhat influenced by Hunayn ibn Ishaq's work (ninth century).⁶⁷ The stories in *Iskandarmana* and in other similar texts⁶⁸ of Alexander are based on Persian and Islamic folklore, as well as from the Qur'an⁶⁹ and other Arabic sources⁷⁰.

Therefore, in Islamic medieval literature of Fabulous Romances, Alexander is portrayed as a mighty ruler and fierce warrior, as well as a mythical and scriptural figure, a sage, a hermit and a Prophet.

The Iranian texts belonging to the Pehlevi, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic genre are not the true translation of Pseudo-Callisthenes. Over many generations, this literature has evolved and changed according to each culture's traditions and local folklore, as well as nationality and religion. Nevertheless, the Iranian literature still developed within the framework of some historical facts.

In the second half of the *Shahnama* the adventures of Alexander, his exploits, triumphs, and travels, are illustrated in great detail, and are based on historical facts from the books of five ancient vulgate authors as well as Pseudo-Callisthenes.⁷¹ The *Shahnama* is an epic of courageous actions, with heroic battle scenes as well as brutal escapades of Alexander are depicted. According to Southgate, the roots of stories portrayed in the *Shahnama*, can be traced back to the *Historiae Alexandri Magni* by Curtius but he further states, stories in the *Shahnama* also fairly faithfully illustrates the Syriac text which was derived from the δ recension of Pseudo-Callisthenes.⁷²

Nizami's portrayal of *Iskandar* is very different from that of Firdausi's; it is more romantic with a fairy-tale approach. The plot has seemingly historical settings but the narratives are not factual. They are overpowered by Iranian writer's imagination and have retained no historical integrity. Thus ultimate

source of the *Iskandarnama*'s stories is designated to the third source, The Fabulous Romances.

¹ Discussed in the following paragraph.

² Written in Greek, named after an erroneously late attribution to Alexander's official Historian Callisthenes of Olynthus. Pseudo-Callisthenes and its derivatives are discussed in the later part of this chapter. Pseudo-Callisthenes has total of four recension, and according to Ross most of western European knowledge of Romantic genre relating to Alexander is based on α , and δ recension of Pseudo-Callisthenes.

David John Athole Ross, *Alexander Historius: A Guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature* 2nd ed. (Frankfort am Main: Athenaum, 1988), 1-7, 47-49, 67-81.

³ From here onwards if the dates are not annotated with B.C.E. it is automatically understood that the dates belong to Common Era.

⁴ Ross, *Alexander Historius*: 1-7, 67; Richard Stoneman, trans., *The Greek Alexander Romance* (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 3-9. Richard Stoneman, trans., *The Legends of Alexander the Great* (London: Everyman, 1994), 10-15.

⁵ Bernhard Gustav Adolf Kubler, ed., *Res Gestae Alexandri Macedonis* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubneri, 1888); and George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1967), 38.

⁶ Stoneman, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 7.

⁷ These appear to have begun in Ptolemaic Egypt, within a century after Alexander's death.

⁸ The thesis outlines a brief overview of the sources of Alexander's historical references. Extensive research has been done by various experts in this field. Here are some of the sources: David John Athole Ross, *Alexander Historius: A guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature* (London: University of London, 1963); David John Athole Ross, *Studies in the Alexander Romance* (London: Pindar Press, 1985); George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1967); R. Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des Griechische Alexanderroman*, (*Zetemata*, IX), W. Kroll, ed. (Munich: 1954); W. W. Tran, *Alexander the Great*, 2 vol. in 1 (Cambridge: The University Press, 1948, repr. 1979); Di Vita, ed., *Alessandro Magno: Storia e mita, exh. cat.* (Rome: Palazzo Ruspoli, 1995); E. N.G.L. Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The So-called Vulgate Authors, Diodorus, Justin, and Curtius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁹ Ancient vulgate authors wrote Alexander's history in Latin using the Greek historical documents written by Alexander's contemporaries or written soon after Alexander's death.

¹⁰ He was contemporary of Emperor Augustus. He wrote world history with emphasis on historical accounts of Alexander the Great. He wrote forty-four books that had survived in two forms. The first is totally credited to Pompeius Trogus but the second is an epitome of the work as a whole which is attributed to a certain Justinus, of whom nothing is known. The second was made before the early fifth century and used as a source by Orosius.

Ross, *Alexander Historius*, 76.

¹¹ A contemporary and trusted servant of Emperor Hadrian.

¹² Dates of Curtius' *historiae* are discussed in the later part of this chapter.

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- ¹³ Pseudo-Callisthenes version narrates more romantic and fictional history of Alexander the Great which is partially based on historical events.
Sarah Burns, ed., *Alexander the Great, Man of Action Man of Spirit*, trans. from French by Jeremy Leggatt, (New York: Harry Abrams, 1996), 43-48.
- ¹⁴ Ross, *Alexander Historius*, 1, 45, 69.
- ¹⁵ These accounts of the five ancient author have survived in extenso.
- ¹⁶ Ptolemy, Nearchus of Loto, and Callisthenes, wrote history of Alexander during the reign of Alexander and Aristobulus, Cleitarchus, and Chares of Mitylene wrote soon after Alexander's death.
Scot McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great* (Malibu: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996), 2.
- ¹⁷ Refer to endnote # 10.
- ¹⁸ E. N. G. L. Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The So-called Vulgate Authors, Diodorus, Justin, and Curtius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 116-59.
- ¹⁹ McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great*, 2.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 3; Ross, *Alexander Historius*, 67.
- ²¹ McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great*, 2-12.
- ²² During Alexander's campaigns and soon after the death of Alexander Aristobulus wrote the account in which he had participated in close association with Alexander.
- ²³ Onesicratus of Astypaleia, chief helmsman of Alexander wrote during various campaigns of Alexander.
- ²⁴ Chares wrote the accounts in which he had closely participated with Alexander during many of his campaigns and also wrote soon after Alexander's death.
- ²⁵ Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: An Analysis of Plutarch's Life and Arrian's*, Cambridge Classical Studies, ed. J. A. Crook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The So-called Vulgate Authors, Diodorus, Justin, and Curtius*, 120-47.
- ²⁶ Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The So-called Vulgate Authors, Diodorus, Justin, and Curtius*, 116-59.
- ²⁷ J. E. Atkinson, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus' Historiae Alexandri Magni Books 3 and 4* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1980), 58.
- ²⁸ McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great*, 2-12.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The So-called Vulgate Authors, Diodorus, Justin, and Curtius*, 116-59.
- ³¹ Ross, *Alexander Historius*, 67; Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great, An Analysis of Plutarch's Life and Arrian's*, 126-28.
- ³² Curtius may have thought it too appalling to censor the old documents but he did use his own judgement throughout his writing and he added and deleted many facts. Atkinson, 58.
- ³³ In contemporary geopolitical climate Persia as a country does not exist. The political boundaries that exist today were not the same thousands of year back. Iranian culture goes back to some seven to eight thousand years back. The first people to have distinct culture, language and religion were the Elamites (ca. 3000 B.C.E.), followed by Assyrians (ca. 700 B.C.E.), and then Meds (621 B.C.E.). Achaemenids defeated the Meds and ruled the vast Central Asian region in sixth century B.C.E. until they were defeated by Alexander the Great in 334 B.C.E. Later, this region was ruled by many different tribes and dynasties over thousands of years. Safavid dynasty, established by Shah Ismail in 1501 played an

important role for modern Iran. In this region, what is known as Iran, (ancient name revived in 1935) was earlier referred in the West as Persia. For the purpose of this thesis Iran refers to the Central Asian region that include Iran, and Parts of Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. From here onwards for the purpose of this thesis, it will be annotated Iranian instead of Persian and Iran instead of Persia.

³⁴ Cary, 266; McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great*, 3-9, 58-60, 75-96.

³⁵ J. Kaerst, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, 1 Bd., 3rd ed. (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1927); H. U. Instinski, *Zur Kontroverse um die Datierung des Curtius Rufus* (Munich: Hermes xc, 1962), 379-83.

³⁶ D. Korzeniewski, "Die Zeit des Quintus Curtius Rufus" (Ph.D. diss., University of Köln, 1959), n.pag.

³⁷ Ross, *Alexander Historius*, 67.

³⁸ A. M. Duff, *A Literary History of Rome in the Silver Age from Tiberius to Hadrian*, 3rd ed. (London: E. Benn, 1964), 231; U. Weidemann, "Review of B. E. Thomasson, *Die Statthalter der Römischen Provinzen Nordafrikas*," *Geldgeschichtliche Nachrichten* xxxvii (n.p.:n.p., 1975), 141-42; H. Grassi, "Zur Datierung des Curtius Rufus," *Philologis* cxviii (n.p.:n.p., 1974), 160-63.

³⁹ McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great*, ix.

⁴⁰ Ross, *Studies in the Alexander Romance*, 7, 52-56; Ross, *Alexander Historius*, 1, 67-71.

⁴¹ General population of Burgundy spoke Netherlandish but it was not the sovereign language. Due to the influence of the Hapsburgs and the importance of the patronage of the Valois dukes, the interest in literary French was reinvigorated. Around 1453, some of the chronicles of Holland and Utrecht were translated into French. The nobility and the educated spoke French. It was also the language of the Burgundian court.

⁴² Arthur John Armstrong, *England, France, and Burgundy in the Fifteenth Century* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1983), 209.

⁴³ McKendrick, "The Illustrated Manuscripts of Vasco de Lucena's Translation of Curtius's *Historiae Alexandri Magni*: Nature Corrupted by Fortune?" in *Medieval Manuscripts of the Latin Classics: Production and use*, ed. Claudine A. Chavannes-Mazel and Margaret M. Smith (Los Altos Hills, California: Anderson-Lovelace, 1996), 131-49.

⁴⁴ Ross, *Alexander Historius*, 69-71; McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great*, 101-3.

⁴⁵ McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great*, 8.

⁴⁶ Cary, 77-161.

⁴⁷ Walter Previnier and Wim Blockmans, *The Burgundian Netherlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 350-55, 360-72; Armstrong, 206-23.

⁴⁸ Peter Arnade, *Realms of Rituals Burgundian Ceremony and civic Life in Late medieval Ghent* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), n.pag.

⁴⁹ Timur belonged to a Turkic-Mongol tribe. In the span of thirty-five years, he conquered Central Asia, Central Iran, and Iraq. He then expanded his empire by winning southern Russian territories, and parts of Indian subcontinent and in the west Timur's army defeated the Mamluks in Syria and Ottomans at Ankara establishing his capital at Samarqand. Linda Komaroff, *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), 20; Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles: The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), 12.

⁵⁰ Hanifah Al-Dinawari (d. 894-5) (The version of Firdausi text in the *Shahnama* resembles the text of Al-Dinawari); AbuJafar Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (839-923); Al-Masudi (ca.

943); Hamzah ibn al-Hasan al-Isfahni (893-970); Abu Ali Muhammad al-Balami translated the history of al-Tabaris into Persian in 936; Abu-Ibn al-Balkhi (ca. 12th century).

⁵¹ Darius III was a powerful Achaemenid ruler who controlled the vast area of the Achaemenid (Persian) Empire. Alexander defeated Darius III and burned the royal palace of Persepolis, thus ending the Achaemenid dynasty in 334 B.C.E.

⁵² Between the ninth and fifteenth century, the authors of Persian and Arabic Alexander Romances inserted their own exotic versions to Alexander Romances. These stories of Alexander were more like fairytales and not grounded in historical facts. Some names and places are recognizable from the historical point of view but others exist only in the realms of legends and fantasy. This category of Alexander romances is designated by Reuben Levy and Southgate as the Fabulous Romances.

Reuben Levy trans. *The Epic of the Kings: Shāh-nāma, the National Epic of Persia*, by Firdowsi, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 243.

⁵³ Achaemenids ruled vast Central Asian region in the sixth century B.C.E. They were the descendents of Indo-European-speaking nomadic people and also were related to the Medes. They established their empire, conquering the region of Parsa or Persis (modern Fars), southeast of Susa and eventually seizing Mesopotamia and rest of the ancient Near East. The term Persian comes from the people of Parsa or Persis. At its zenith, Achaemenid Empire (also known as Persian Empire) extended from Africa to India, including Babylonia, Medes, stretching from northern Iran through Anatolia, and Aegean Islands. The creation of this empire represented a profound change in the geopolitical status of the region, bringing it for the first time under the sway of king Cyrus the Great, who styled himself as the king of kings—the Great King. Achaemenids were unsuccessful in conquering the mainland Greece and eventually they were defeated by Alexander, who crossed into Anatolia and swept through Mesopotamia, defeating the powerful Achaemenid ruler, Darius III in 334 B.C.E. Sarah Burns ed., *Alexander the Great, Man of Action Man of Spirit*, trans. from French by Leggatt, 23-33.

⁵⁴ Ancient vulgate authors, Curtius, Trogus/Justin, Orosius.

Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The So-called Vulgate Authors, Diodorus, Justin, and Curtius*, 116-37.

⁵⁵ Ancient vulgate authors were Greek. Darius III had attacked mainland Greece several times in order to expand Achaemenid Empire.

⁵⁶ Olga M. Davidson, *Poet and Hero in the Persian Book of Kings* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 13.

⁵⁷ Extensive researches have been done to trace the history of Alexander from various sources. Among them Pseudo-Callisthenes is one of the major sources for Alexander's romances. A brief overview is given below tracing sources from the Greek Manuscripts. For more information refer to these books and articles: W. Kroll, ed., *Historia Alexandri Magni (Pseudo-Callisthenes)*, Vol. 1 *Reccenso Vetusta* (Berlin: 1926); R. Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des Griechischen Alexanderromans' Zetemata*, xi (Munich, 1954); George Cary, "A note on the Medieval History of the Collatio Alexandri cum Dindimo," in *Classica et Mediavalia*, xv (1954), 124-29; George Cary, "Petrarch and Alexander the Great," in *Italian Studies*, V (1950), 43-55; *Cambridge Medieval History III* (1930).

The Pseudo-Callisthenes has four main branches: α, β, γ, and δ recension. The α recension is the earliest extant source of the immense body of legendary Alexander literature and a major source of medieval knowledge of Alexander in Europe. Two major translations credited to the α recension are: (1) The Armenian translation made in the fifth century, and (2) The translation by Jilius Valerius, *Res Gestae Alexandri Macedonis*, ca. 320, widely popular in

medieval Europe. The β recension is a revision of the α recension, and majority of the surviving Greek manuscripts of Pseudo-Callisthenes is of this recension. Principal derivatives of the β recension are: (1) A Bulgarian life of Alexander, written around 12th century which was translated into the Russian chronographs, and (2) The 14th century Byzantine Greek Poem: $\delta \beta \acute{\iota} \omicron \varsigma \text{ A}\Lambda\epsilon \Sigma \text{ av}\delta\text{pou}$. The γ recension is expanded from the β recension by a writer familiar with Jewish sources. Its principal derivatives are: (1) A Hebrew Romance which emphasizes the extraordinary element in Alexander's life (2) The Serbian Alexander dating from about the 14th century, and (3) Modern Greek chapbook Alexander, first printed in Venice, 1699.

Cary, 1, 10-14, 38-61; Ross, *Studies in Alexander Romances*, 194; Ross, *Alexander Historius*, 45-65; Southgate, 1-3, 167-219.

⁵⁸ Recension is a scholarly term meaning major version.

⁵⁹ Cary, 1, 10-14, 38-61; Southgate, 1-3, 167-219.

⁶⁰ Cary, 10.

⁶¹ Pehlevi literature was written around the third century on words, in Pehlevi (Middle Persian). It is an almost entirely theological and liturgical literature written by Zoroastrians in the Pehlevi script. Pahlavi literature differs from the writings of later Iranian historians as Iranian writers drew more upon Western sources. In contrast, Zoroastrians wrote history from their own experiences. Alexander had defeated the Achaemenid dynasty. They did not see Alexander in a favorable light as he had burned their sacred books, executed their priests, burned their chahar-taq (fire temples), and the magnificent palace in Persepolis which was a symbol of Achaemenid's power and glory.

⁶² Cary, 21.

⁶³ Southgate, 1-7, 167-221.

⁶⁴ Ross, *Studies in Alexander Romances*, 194; Cary, 10-11, 38-61

⁶⁵ Southgate, 168.

⁶⁶ Levy, 232-37, 243-48.

⁶⁷ In the ninth century, Arabic book of proverbs by Hunayn ibn Ishaq, in which a section is devoted to the accounts where Alexander is portrayed as various philosophers followed by a collection of their wise saying. This type of literature was popular with the Arab writer and Southgate hypothesizes that this type of literature may have originated in Greek, but no Greek text is extant at present.

Southgate, 168.

⁶⁸ *Khiradnamah-yi Iskandari* (Book of Alexander's Wisdom: 1485-91) by, Jami; *Darabnamah* (12th Century) by Tarsus, Series of accounts compiled by Abu afar Muhammad ibn Jar al-Tabor (839-923); *Al-Dinnerware* by Al-Mastoids (ca. 943).

⁶⁹ Many of Iranian historians have derived some information about Alexander from the passage in the Qur'an: Sura, "Kahaf, Dhul-Qarnain," *The Two-horned*. The name Alexander, is not mentioned anywhere in this Qur'anic passage, but most scholars seem to believe that it refers to Alexander. And yes, there are many debates and discussions about this subject, therefore, diversity of each scholar's explanation prevents us from coming to a final consensus. The Fabulous Alexander Romance narrates the story of Alexander, and identifying him with Dhul-Qarnain of the Qur'an. It recounts the story of Alexander's journey to the exalted places such as, the exact locations where the sun rises and sun sets and also endowing great powers to Alexander to build a wall against Gog and Megog. (Qur'an, Sura 18:82 ff).

Southgate, 3, 196-201.

⁷⁰ One of the sources being Hunayn ibn Ishaq.

⁷¹ Davidson, 3; The Marchioness of Winchester, *Heroines of Ancient Iran, Stories Retold from the Shahnama* (London: Hutchinson & co., 1954), 4-6; Dick Davis, *Epic and Sedition* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1992), 11.

⁷² Southgate, 2, 167-69, 187.

CHAPTER 2

THE ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL CLIMATE

BURGUNDY:

In many cultures, art and religion are closely connected, with former serving the latter. In the Burgundian Netherlands religion provided the background for artistic expression. With economic prosperity and urbanization, there was a shift of power in the social structure and secular values penetrated the church at all levels. In fact most artists worked for both these sectors of the society: church as well as secular, that helped to bridge the gap between the sectors.¹ By the fifteenth century secular urban centers replaced monastic centers in the production of illustrated books.² The bourgeois elite largely supported the State, and therefore the focus of art also shifted from exclusively religious (church) to secular. Hence, the historical books of Alexander and other famous conquerors became very popular.

Burgundy was a small but wealthy principality, whose dynastic rule under the Valois dukes lasted from 1384 to the late fifteenth century. Under the four successive dukes,³ Burgundy pursued a policy to obtain some independence from French rule. Philip the Bold (reigned 1384-1404) succeeded in his quest to enlarge his territories⁴ during his brilliant reign, and Philip the Good (1419-1467) allied himself openly with France's archenemy, England, in his quest for more independence. Charles the Bold (reigned 1467-1477) established a link between religion and the state.⁵ Therefore piety often had political flavor. And the Burgundian dukes used Alexander's heroics as an inspiration to further their cause.

The official language of the Burgundian court was French and the Valois dukes promoted literary French in the Low Countries. They respected French literature and encouraged the translation of old historical literature from the language of antiquity (Latin) into French.⁶ However, the Burgundian rulers did not follow a policy of linguistic restriction, and encouraged the use of both Netherlandish (their mother tongue) as well as French. Thus the Burgundian rulers were indirectly responsible for promoting bilingualism within the ruling class.⁷ Burgundy was nevertheless part of France, even though the Burgundian rulers spent a large part of their time fighting French rulers. This semi-independent principality was interconnected to its mother country, France, with geographic boundaries and linguistic uniformity that led to greater national and cultural homogeneity.

Internal and external stability contributed towards increasing trade volume, which brought about economic prosperity. Burgundy governed long-distance trading routes as private facilities, and strove to become a dynamic society in pre-industrial Europe. The municipal elite controlled urban surroundings, and they also controlled the whole economy no matter how significant the agrarian population was; therefore Burgundian culture became essentially an urban culture.⁸

Because of this wealthy urban population, literacy among the bourgeois elite was very high. Due to high literacy, there was a shift from an oral culture to a written culture, in which illustrated books took center stage and were widely read by urban audiences. Consequently there was much greater interest in the production of books, especially historical manuscripts that were very

popular at that time.⁹ The new class of urban literate socialites contributed towards the Golden Age and also towards the refinement of the court culture of the Burgundian Netherlands.¹⁰

With economic prosperity, the inclination to invest in art became stronger especially in prosperous urban areas such as Bruges, Brussels, Ghent, Ypres, and Dijon; consequently these urban areas also became leading centers for art production. It became socially prestigious for the noble elite as well as merchants to own works of art, especially illustrated manuscripts. As a result these non-liturgical manuscripts sometimes became a convenient tool for propaganda to endorse the sovereign's point of view.¹¹ Beside the dukes, and noble elite, laity, burghers, and even tradesmen became patrons of art. These individuals commissioned luxuriously illustrated books from the same artists that had served the sovereign rulers. Thus they could demonstrate how they had spent their accumulated wealth from government service wisely and honorably, and at the same time immortalize their glory and that of their families by personalizing the manuscripts.

In addition to art, the bourgeois social viewpoint also penetrated literature and music, which gave birth to profane themes and also propagated realistic imagery in art. The naturalistic iconography in the Getty's manuscript of Alexander (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, Ludwig XV 8) is the proof of new trends towards realism. This new social disposition became a bridge between medieval and Renaissance perspectives.¹²

Exquisite tapestries were another medium that promoted historical themes, such as the tapestries depicting Philip of Macedonia and Alexander the

Great. Burgundian rulers were preoccupied with the image of these ancient rulers and sought to exploit Alexander's image to enhance their status. They believed the glory of distant ancestors (Alexander) reflected the glory of the dynasty. Charles the Bold fancied himself as Alexander the Great, and had grandiose plans for military campaigns.¹³ One of the Alexander tapestries was hung on the walls of the palace at Bruges for Charles the Bold's wedding feast in 1473, to impress other emperors in passing with the image of an illustrious predecessor.

The Dukes of Burgundy were enthusiastic patrons of the *livre de luxe* and during the reign of Philip the Good in particular, there was a prolific production of high quality manuscripts. In almost all non-liturgical manuscripts, a presentation scene became an important feature that adorned the beginning of each manuscript. In many cases the presentation scene included a unique realistic portrait gallery, with recognizable individuals surrounding the dukes. This tradition had started during the reign of Charles V. Later new presentation grouping was developed for Philip the Good, and Charles the Bold, dukes of Burgundy that included the luxuriously dressed duke and fashionably dressed members of the Burgundian courts.¹⁴

Philip the Good loved classical texts as well as the books of the great conquerors. He also commissioned a new translation of the life of Alexander the Great which became very popular.¹⁵ He was a bibliophile and regularly gave interesting commissions to a variety of translators, copyists, illuminators, and bookbinders thus attracting foreign as well as native artists to his court.¹⁶

Because of this phenomenon, illustrated manuscript production in the Low Countries during the Burgundian period spread throughout Europe. Painters gave original expression to the spirit of the age. These works were admired, sought after, and collected throughout Europe. Non-liturgical books, in particular the historical genre belonging to Alexander the Great, became a rage.¹⁷ Individual signatures of famous artists were highly prized, carried sufficient prestige, and were universally recognized.¹⁸

Collecting illustrated manuscripts became fashionable. Beside royalty, nobility as well as wealthy tradesmen collected liturgical and non-liturgical manuscripts. Since art was not collected exclusively by the monarchy, production of art became a free-enterprise institution, unlike at the Timurid court, where art production was exclusively institutionalized by the *kitabkhana*.¹⁹ Burgundian artists were like entrepreneurs, independent professional craftsmen who belonged to their own particular schools.

The fourteenth-century records indicate that not many medieval monarchs felt it necessary to keep artists²⁰ exclusively in their employment.²¹ The royal household employed administrative personnel catering to the monarch's needs, and the few artists that were associated with the royal houses were employed as civil servants and were connected to the court. The Duke of Burgundy sometimes sent artists on diplomatic missions.²² To ensure good relations with monarchs sometimes Illuminated manuscripts were presented as diplomatic gifts.²³ An artist's position in a noble household was vague and undefined; officially he was known as *valet de chambre* often performing the duties of a foreign ambassador.

Artists did not want to work exclusively for the Dukes or the royal household because financially they were much better off if they worked independently. Jehan de Pestimen, one of the artists who had served at the ducal court since 1418, was reduced to poverty until Philip the Good granted him a small pension to survive. Around the fifteenth century the demand for manuscripts exceeded more than booksellers could produce, it was more rewarding for artists to receive individual commissions.²⁴

Sandra Hindman distinguishes between two types of patronage: *mécenat* and *clientele*.²⁵ *Mécenat* refers to commissioned manuscripts specially produced for specific clients, and *clientele* refers to books made on speculation without any particular client in mind. There was a vast growth of speculative book production in the Low Countries. Because of strong economic prosperity in and around Bruges,²⁶ book dealers had many fine volumes ready and waiting for buyers (*clientele*). There are records of at least three manuscripts of Alexander²⁷ (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fr. 47, 48, 49; Oxford, Bodleian, Laud. Misc. 751; Stockholm, Skokloster, MS 131), that were produced in Bruges; it is thought that they were initially produced without any buyer in mind.²⁸

Over and above commissions for large elaborate manuscripts²⁹ (*mécenat*), secular booksellers also had books ready with written text but without decoration until the interested client offered a suitable price.³⁰ As a result the bookseller's risk was reduced, and the clients were offered a wide range of choices as to the finishing of the manuscript. Clients could choose their own artist and the degree of elaborateness in the decorations, according to their

financial ability. It also gave clients an opportunity to personalize manuscripts by adding their own coats-of-arms and emblems.³¹

While illuminators still painted the luxurious manuscripts, emergence of printing press in the middle of the fifteenth century brought about many changes in the production of manuscripts. Invention of printing press created a need for more paper and by mid to late fifteenth century paper was more freely available in Europe and it also became infinitely cheaper. But vellum was still the primary medium for the luxurious manuscripts.³² There are three manuscripts of Alexander that utilized blocking and printing techniques.³³ Introduction of printed books produced an explosion of knowledge, which can be compared to the computer revolution of the twentieth century.

The Burgundian period showed an evolution towards the secularization of art. Religious themes gave way to secular urban realism, transitioning towards a new era, which signaled the beginning of Renaissance attitudes. The more cosmopolitan topics of ancient history, chivalry, legends, and folklore became the preferred subjects. Because of these social changes, Alexander's historical account took center stage and Burgundian dukes used Alexander's image and persona to further their own causes.

TIMURID IRAN:

Timur was a dynamic, charismatic Central Asian ruler and was the romanticized character of plays by Christopher Marlowe (1587) and Jacques Pradon (1691), operas by Alessandro Scarlatti (1706) and George Frideric Handel (1724), and poem by Edgar Allen Poe (1827). Under his patronage a new and highly refined visual language emerged, creating the dynastic art,

which articulated his vision of might and grandeur, sophisticated facade of splendor and cultural authority that left his footprints in the sands of time.

In the late-fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the *Shahnama*³⁴ became more than a work of Iranian literature. It represented deeply rooted concepts of honor and morality, and stood as a political treatise especially among the Timurid ruling elites. One of the ways the Timurids reinforced their claims to power was by actively engaging in broad programs of cultural and political propaganda, and epics such as *Shahnama* and *Khamasa*³⁵ of Nizami became great tools for their campaigns.³⁶ These epic literatures, especially the *Shahnama* helped the Timurids to assimilate Iranian cultural traditions with Turco-Mongol³⁷ political objectives.

The *Khamasa* of Nizami represented themes of heroics, romance, and above all, royal myth. These manuscripts stressed the celebratory aspect of Alexander's rules by including court rituals that were practiced in the Timurid period. The Timurids wanted to reconcile the semi nomadic steppe traditions of Central Asia to the eastern urban Islamic, and in particular, Iranian culture. In order to assimilate themselves into Iranian culture they sought to incorporate Central Asian traditions with contemporary Iranian costumes, provincial architecture, and Iranian inscriptions in their illustrated epics;³⁸ likewise Burgundians also incorporated contemporary Burgundian costumes with pointy shoes and conical headdresses as well as contemporary architecture representative of that era in Alexander's manuscripts.³⁹

Timur reinforced his cultural vision by bringing artists,⁴⁰ craftsmen, and literati from the lands he had conquered to his new capital in Samarqand.⁴¹ As his successors established their own new capitals in Herat, Tabriz, Shiraz, and Isfahan, they proceeded to do the same and transplanted artists to their new capitals. As a result, these great epic illustrations represented refinements of brilliant technical advances of highly acclaimed Jalayrid⁴² artists at Baghdad and Tabriz, territories the Timurids had conquered.⁴³ The fifteenth-century Iranian⁴⁴ and European⁴⁵ records reaffirm this phenomenon. These Timurid painters and calligraphers validated the princely visions and aspirations in great epics including the *Shahnama* and the *Khamasa*, and also in other types of literary manuscripts such as anthologies, poems, and historical dossiers, thus affirming the ruler's legitimacy and power. Timurid manuscript paintings had a lyrical quality, yet at the same time they extended a politically potent, powerful message.

Timur's greatest legacy was his establishment of a *kitabkhana* (a royal library or workshop).⁴⁶ This marvelous institution, established a new cohesive and unified visual language of noble ideals, and produced official histories, epic manuscripts, and paintings celebrating the great warlord's rule. These luxurious illuminated manuscripts celebrated Turco-Mongol ideals of military prowess and leadership within the context of the Iranian literary and artistic traditions.⁴⁷ Beside illuminated manuscripts and paintings, the *kitabkhana* also produced textiles, rugs, and objects made with metal, wood, and hard-stones. The Timurid princes, especially Baysunghur,⁴⁸ (1397-1434) was a bibliophile and a patron of the *livre de luxe*, inherited the

institution of the *kitabkhana*. With the help of the *kitabkhana*, Baysunghur revised and recompiled the verses from the *Shahnama*, further refining the text and its illustrations and occasionally even dramatically altering its illustrative cycle.⁴⁹ Similarly, Burgundian dukes also were and patrons of the *livre de luxe*, and especially Philip the Good who was also a bibliophile, commissioned exquisite manuscripts and ordered a new translation of the life of Alexander the Great.

Books became an integral part of the new culture and represented the most sophisticated embodiment of the Timurid civilization. Luxuriously illustrated books of classical texts, epics, and poetry were coveted, resulting in commissions for a great number of major dynastic manuscripts.⁵⁰ Timurid princes gathered groups of poets, and the collecting of poetic verses became a major passion for royalty throughout the eastern Islamic world. *Majlis* served as a literary assembly and a forum for poetic expression and recitation.⁵¹ A sophisticated cultural veneer conveyed in poetry or in works of art generated considerable prestige, which in turn translated into political power.

The tradition of recitation goes back to 610, when Prophet Mohammed received the first revelation from Allah through arch angel Gabriel, a voice commanding him, "Recite in the name of thy lord"

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ

From the seventh century, tradition of reciting the holiest book, the Qur'an, became an important part of the Islamic culture. As Islam flourished and spread from Mecca to various parts of the world, the tradition of recitation became much stronger and from the twelfth century onwards, for the literati in Iran, recitation of Shahnama became an important part of their culture.

Although the Timurids' native language was Turkish, everything connected with Iranian culture, particularly Iranian epics and poetry written in Farsi⁵² became important to them. Similarly, French was not the native language in modern Belgium or the Netherlands but the Burgundian dukes adopted French as their official language and also promoted French literature. Timurids encouraged bilingualism just as the Burgundians (French and Netherlandish) had. Timurids whole-heartedly embraced Iranian literature and poetry at the same time they encouraged Turkish poetry and promoted Turkish scholarship.⁵³ Many Timurid princes became patrons as well as composers of Iranian poetry in Farsi.

The *Nasayih-i Iskandar*⁵⁴ *The Counsels of Alexander* (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS. 4183, f.12a) is one of the most self-affirming ethical commentaries (written in poetic form) of Timurid ideals, the principles of government, and the princely rule. [Illustration 4]

The world is a garden for the state to master.
The state is power supported by the law.
The law is policy administered by the king.
The king is a shepherd supported by the army.
The army are assistants provided for by taxation.
Taxation is sustenance gathered by subjects.
Subjects are slaves provided for by justice.
Justice is that by which the rectitude of the world subsists.⁵⁵

The *Nasayih-i Iskandar* is attributed to Aristotle,⁵⁶ but in reality it is said to be typical of a didactic genre known in Islamic literature as the *Mirror for Princes*.⁵⁷ These principles describe a closed, idealized, and abstracted world in which good government and political stability are prerogative, a result of exemplary princely rule. After Timur had conquered Iran in the fifteenth century, he sought to establish his empire precisely according to this tradition, which Alexander had embraced.

The *Nasayih-i Iskandar* is typical of the works of art and literature that were important for the Timurid dynasty. One of the most distinguished calligraphers, Ja'far Tabrizi al-Baysunghuri, who worked in Baysunghur's *kitabkhana*, copied *Nasayih-i Iskandar* for his master.⁵⁸ Its elegant calligraphic design, against a brilliant blue background accented by gold circles; its depth and purity of rich pigmentation heightened by precisely drawn graceful lines; its complex geometric, floral, and vegetal patterns cradling the central medallion, emphasize the primacy of royal power. Cloaked in ornamented calligraphy and brilliant illumination, this manuscript conveys a powerful political message, a typical Timurid practice of using art as a vehicle for royal propaganda. The Burgundian dukes also used art as a propagandistic tool to express their own point of view by exploiting the image of Alexander in their illuminated manuscripts. It helped the dukes to promote their own political agenda.

By early fifteenth century, the Timurid privileged aristocracy and the Farsi-speaking Shiite *ulema*⁵⁹ in spite of their differences, learned to coexist peacefully. In the affairs of city government administration, the military had

lesser involvement. The *ulema* appointed the *viziers* and the *diwans* (ministers) who ran municipal affairs as well as *madrasas*⁶⁰ of the cities.⁶¹ As the fifteenth century progressed, the Timurid princes managed to acquire strong support from *ulema* as well as *sufis*,⁶² and thus the Timurid rule was characterized by dual patronage and cultural pluralism.⁶³ In this type of dual rule — fervently religious and powerfully dynastic, Timurid manuscript illumination flourished and attained new summits.⁶⁴

As Timur firmly established himself in Iran, he reshaped the political, cultural, and military structure, and created a mythical aura about himself that bespoke of his might and valor, the same type of mythical aura that Alexander had created for himself.⁶⁵ He cultivated a facade that projected a carefully crafted princely vision, and manipulated artistic objectives to shape his political agenda. The new political and social order helped him to establish the most sophisticated court in the history of the Islamic world, and rulers from other parts of the Muslim world sought to emulate the monarchy that Timur had created.⁶⁶

Political and cultural stability was further enhanced by economic prosperity. This prosperity was due to strong international and regional trade, along with an abundance of agricultural resources. This was also true of the Burgundians. They also had established strong local and international trades along with copious agriculture products that helped to achieve economic prosperity. The agrarian population in Iran as well as in Burgundy was larger than the urban population and they produced abundant crops that

helped to increase their economic prosperity, never the less political power lay with the urban populations of both of these cultures.⁶⁷

Because of economic prosperity, the Timurid princes revitalized their new capitals — Herat, Tabriz, Shiraz, and Isfahan, reconstructing walls and citadels along with restoring important religious structures, and also building bazaars and other trading establishments.⁶⁸ Various Timurid sultans cultivated relations with foreign courts. They exchanged diplomatic letters with the Ottoman sultans of Turkey, and initiated commercial treaties with Egypt, India, and China.⁶⁹

In addition, Timurid sultans established diplomatic relations and exchanged ambassadors with the Ming dynasty at Peking (Beijing) in China.⁷⁰ In 753 the paper was introduced to Iran from China.⁷¹ Central Asian Muslims in the later part of the eighth century not only imported paper from China on a grand scale, they also learned the art of manufacturing paper from the Chinese, establishing their own paper mills throughout their empire.⁷² By the tenth century Central Asian Muslims were exporting the finest quality paper to other Islamic empires such as, the Fatemids⁷³ in Maghrib (North Africa), Umayyad⁷⁴ in al-Andalus (southern Spain) and Abbasids⁷⁵ in parts of Asia and North Africa.⁷⁶

Increasingly paper was utilized more than vellum, which was expensive to produce. For Timurids abundance of paper along with superior quality made the production of manuscripts easier and cheaper.⁷⁷ In Europe, paper was not yet freely available until mid to late fifteenth century and the primary material for manuscripts remained vellum, which was more difficult

to produce than paper.⁷⁸ For the Timurids, and other earlier Islamic dynasties the availability of paper elevated the art of illumination and calligraphy to a new height.⁷⁹

After Timur, all his successors continued to support the *kitabkhana*. In fact, under seven royal princes and princesses — Shah Rukh (1377-1447) at Herat, Gawharshad (d. 1457) at Samarqand, Baysunghur (1397-1434) at Herat, Iskandar Sultan (1384-1415) at Shiraz, Ibrahim-Sultan (1394-1435) in Fars and Shiraz, Ulugh-Beg at Samarqand, and Mohammed Juki (1402-44) at Herat, [Diagram 5] the *kitabkhana* grew much larger and refined the aesthetic vocabulary of Timurid forms.⁸⁰ For artists, poets, calligraphers, bookbinders, and other craftsmen, it was an honor to belong to the *kitabkhana*. Statements from an *arzadasht* (petition) [Illustration 20]⁸¹ confirm that the *kitabkhana* was the major source of Timurid decorative schemes.⁸²

One sees many dissimilarities between the Burgundian and Timurid style of art production. While the *kitabkhana* dominated almost all art production especially royal manuscripts, which were almost exclusively produced for the Timurid princes and elite aristocracy, in Burgundy, art became a free enterprise. Besides royalty, illustrated manuscripts were also collected by the laity, burghers, and even tradesmen in Burgundy. Timurid artists, poets, calligraphers, and bookbinders deemed it an honor to work for the *kitabkhana*, whereas Burgundian artists preferred to work independently. They did not want to belong to any royal household because it was more profitable for artists to get independent commissions.

The national epics from the Timurid *kitabkhana* illustrated the purity of design, harmony of colors, delicately drawn patterns, and subtle balance of compositions that exemplified the classical style of Iranian miniature painting producing extensive manuscripts with some of the most brilliant illuminations. Within one century, they produced a greater number of epics such as the *Khamasa* of Nizami and the *Shahnama* than almost any other Iranian dynasty.⁸³ Experts⁸⁴ in Islamic art strongly believe that the Golden Age of Iranian manuscript painting under the Safavid shahs⁸⁵ is credited to the legacy of the Timurid artists.⁸⁶

¹ Walter Previnier and Wim Blockmans, *The Burgundian Netherlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 351-52.

² Sandra Hindman, "The Illustrated Book: an Addendum to the State of Research in Northern Europe Art," *Art Bulletin* LXVIII, no. 4 (December 1986), 537-42.

³ (1) Philip the Bold (1383-1404), (2) John the Fearless (1404-1419), (3) Philip the Good (1419-1467), (4) Charles the Bold (1467-1477).

⁴ Ruth Massey Tovell, *Flemish Artists of the Valois Courts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), 28; Fig 5. Manuscript: *Philip the Bold Instructing His Captain*, MS. E74; *nseignements pour un Seigneur*, ca. 1384, Theodore Paleologue, Brussels, Bibliotheque Royale, MS. 11042, Fol. 12.

⁵ Burgundy was an independent duchy founded in the later part of the ninth century. It was expanded in the 14th and 15th centuries during the reign of four Valois dukes.

Arend Huussen Jr., *Historical Dictionary of the Netherlands* (London: The Scarecrow Press, 1998), 35.

⁶ A. J. Armstrong, *England, France, and Burgundy in the Fifteenth Century* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1998), 208, 211; Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1973), 163, 212.

⁷ Armstrong, 206-211.

⁸ David Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders* (London: Longman Group UK, 1992), 357-66.

Agrarian population was larger than the urban population. The farmers produced abundant food that helped to increase economic prosperity but the municipal elite wielded the power.

⁹ Christopher De Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Guild Publishing, 1986), 136.

¹⁰ Previnier and Blockmans, 360-72; James McKinnon, ed. *Antiquity and the Middle Ages From Ancient Greece to the Fifteenth Century*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), 303-7.

¹¹ Herbert L. Kessler, "On the State of Medieval Art History," *Art Bulletin* LXX, no. 2 (June 1988), 170.

¹² Paul Binski, "Gothic. International Gothic style, ca.1380-1440," *The Grove Dictionary of Art*. 29 Jan. 2001, online, 1-2, available from <http://www.groveart.com/tdaonline/articles/index.asp?level=T033636>

¹³ Vaughan, 197.

¹⁴ Scot McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great: an Illuminated Manuscript of Vasco da Lucena's French Translation of the Ancient Text by Quintus Curtius Rufus* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996), 68-69.

¹⁵ Thomas Kren and Roger S. Wieck, *The Visions of Tondal from the Library of Margaret of York* (Malibu: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1990), 10-15.

¹⁶ Vaughan, 131, 162-65; Kren and Wieck, 12-14.

¹⁷ Previnier and Blockmans, 307-9.

¹⁸ Ibid., 349.

¹⁹ See the following section entitled "Timurid Iran."

²⁰ Artists belonged to guilds or worked independently in various media such as scribes, painters, illuminators, bookbinders, goldsmiths, etc.

²¹ Martin Lowry, "Sister or Cousin? The Huntington Recuyell and the Getty Tondal," *Margaret of York, Simon Marmion, and the Visions of Tondal: Papers Delivered at a Symposium Organized by the Department of Manuscripts of the J. Paul Getty Museum in Collaboration with the Huntington Library and Art Collections, June 21-24, 1990*, ed. Kren (Malibu: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1991), 105.

²² Andrew Martindale, *The Rise of the Artist in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1972), 36-46.

²³ Michelle Brown and Scott McKendrick, *Illuminating the Book Makers and Interpreters* (Toronto: University Of Toronto Press, 1998), 130.

²⁴ Lörne Campbell, "The Art Market in the Southern Netherlands in the Fifteenth Century," *Burlington Magazine* 118 (1976):192-94; Blockman, 359-69.

²⁵ Sandra Hindman, "The Illustrated Book," 542.

²⁶ Bruges was a vibrant commercial center.

²⁷ P. R. Monks and D. D. R. Owen ed. *Medieval Codicology, Iconography, Literature, and Translation: Studies for Keith Val Sinclair*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 48-53.

²⁸ J. Blachhouse, *Sir John Donne's Flemish Manuscripts* (Netherlands: n.p., 1994), 50-52.

²⁹ L. Campbell, 194. According to Mr. Campbell only a small number of books were actually commissioned.

Known commissioned manuscripts of Alexander: Bern, Stadtbibliothek, MS A.25, for the Duke of Savoy; Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, MS 2566, for Louis, Batard de Bourbon; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fr. 22547, supposedly a copy presented to Charles the Bold; Copenhagen, Royal Library, Thott 540, for Anthony of Burgundy and his bastard half-brother; and London, British Museum, Royal Library 15 D IV, for Guillaume de la Baume, knight of the Golden Fleece.

³⁰ One of the Alexander manuscripts (Oxford, Bodleian, Douce 318) has empty spaces that were meant for miniature decorations.

³¹ Eva Wilson, "Ornament and pattern: Western. Medieval," *The Grove Dictionary of Art*. 29 Jan. 2001, online, available from

<http://www.groveart.com/tdaonline/articles/index.asp?level=T063893>

Four manuscripts of Alexander are heavily personalized with arms, emblems, and devices of the owner forming an integral part of the decoration: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fr. 6440; Copenhagen, Royal Library, Thott 540; Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, MS 2566; Geneva, Bibl. Publique et Universitaire, fr. 76. In a few others, personalization of arms and emblems may have been done at the end when the client decided to purchase the book: Stockholm, Skokloster, MS 131; and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fr. 257.

³² Christopher De Hamel, *Medieval Craftsmen Scribes and Illuminators* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 16.

³³ David John Athole Ross, *Alexander Historiatus; A Guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature* 2nd ed. (Frankfort am Main: Athenaum, 1988), 71.

Refer to Chart # 1.

³⁴ The *Shahnama*, or The Book of Kings, is the national epic that chronicles the complete history and culture of Iran. It is written by one of the most talented poets of Iran, Firdausi who devoted thirty-four years to this great work, completing his epic around 1015-1025. This *masnavi* (long poem) contains nearly sixty thousand *bayts* or couplets written in flowing Persian verse.

³⁵ The *Khamasa* by Nizami (d.1209) is a book of romantic poems. The word *Khamasa* literally means "Quintet." Nizami's work was written around the 1270s to 1320s C.E., and consists of five-poems in *masnavis* poetic form. For his *masnavi* Nizami synthesized pre-Islamic and Islamic Persian topics from the oral tradition and historical records. Therefore for the theme of his last poem, he chose Alexander, the Great or *Iskandar* and he considered *Iskandarnama* his most important work.

³⁶ Marianna S. Simpson, *The Illustration of an Epic: the Earliest Shahnama Manuscripts* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1979), n.pag.; Marianna S. Simpson, *Arab and Persian Painting in the Fogg Art Museum* (Cambridge: Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, 1980), 14; Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History: the Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shahnama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 15-18; Dalu Jones and George Michell ed. *The Arts of Islam: Hayward Gallery 8 April-4 July 1976*, (London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1976), 311.

³⁷ Timur belonged to a Turco-Mongol tribe and settled in Transoxiana in 1370. Although Iran and central Asian region was permeated by Iranian culture with its urban and Islamic orientation, numerous nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes of Turco-Mongol origin played a major role in the area. According to Linda Komaroff, Timur conquered the different groups and integrated them in to his domain, creating one of the largest empires in the history. Timur was a Tarter, a Turk by race and speech whose ancestors had converted to Islam. He was a devout Sunni Muslim, and a Muslim scholar and Hafiz, the one who can recite the entire Qur'an by heart.

Linda Komaroff, *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), 20.

³⁸ Thomas Lentz and Glenn Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision* (Los Angeles: The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), 126.

Iskandar Visiting the Hermit. Khamasa of Nizami. Copied for Amir Ali Farsi Barlas, probably Herat, 1494-95. London, British Library, Or. 6810.

³⁹ McKendrick, 35-36.

⁴⁰ Many artists perceived it to be an honor to work for the Timurid *kitabkhana*, but sometimes gentle force was applied to convince the artists to move.

Princely Patron: Three Royal Manuscripts of Timurid Dynasty edited by Islamic department, Metropolitan Museum of Art, (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 2; George Michell ed. *The Arts of Islam: Hayward Gallery 8 April-4 July 1976*, 311.

⁴¹ George Michell ed. *The Arts of Islam: Hayward Gallery 8 April-4 July 1976*, 311; *Princely Patron: Three Royal Manuscripts of Timurid Dynasty*, 1; Esin Atil, *The Brush of the Masters: Drawing from Iran to India* (Washington D.C.: The Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 12.

⁴² Jalayrids succeeded the Ilkhanids (Mongols) in northwestern Iran and Iraq establishing their capitals in Baghdad and Tabriz. Baghdad became a major creative center under patronage of Sultan Uvays (1358-74) and his son Ahmad (1382-1410). The city was captured twice by Timur who took number of artists back to his capital in Samarqand. Daughter of

Sultan Ahmad married Timurid prince, Iskandar Sultan who had been appointed governor of Shiraz by his Uncle Shah Rukh. The Timurid *kitabkhana* adopted classical style of Persian painting developed under the Jalayrids.

⁴³ *Princely Patron: Three Royal Manuscripts of Timbered Dynasty*, 2; Atil, 12-13.

⁴⁴ Petis de la Croix Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi trans. *Zafarnama* (London: V. Darbis, 1937), n.pag.

⁴⁵ Guy Le Strange trans. Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403-1406* (New York: Harper, 1928), 218-300.

⁴⁶ There were many great royal libraries (*kitabkhana*) in medieval Islam, including those in Cairo, Baghdad, and Cordoba, which contained books on a wide variety of religious and secular subjects. The institute of *kitabkhana* existed under Jalayrids and possibly earlier but under Timur responsibilities of *kitabkhana* were expanded and gained much prominence.

⁴⁷ Komaroff, 20.

⁴⁸ Grandson of Timur.

⁴⁹ J. Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*, trans. P. Van Popta-Hope (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1968), 170.

⁵⁰ Besides the *Khamisa* and the *Shahnama*, many other manuscripts were commissioned on various subjects including poetry, history, medicine, etc., such as: *Anthology*, dated 1407, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H.796; *Anthology*, copied for Baysunghur, 1426-27, Florence, Berenson Collection, I Tatti, Settignano, Fol. 26 v; *Anthology*, copied for Iskandar Sultan, 1410-11, London, British Library, Add. 27261; *Gulistan* (Rose Garden) of Sa'di, copied for Baysunghur, 1426-27, Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS 119; *Humay u Humayun* of Khwaju Kirmani, copied for Baysunghur, 1427-28, Vienna, Nationalbibliothek, N.F. 382; *Anthology*, copied for Iskandar Sultan, 1410-11, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, L.A.161; and many more.

⁵¹ Lentz and Lowry, 380.

⁵² The language of Iran, usually written in *Nastaliq* calligraphic script.

⁵³ George Michell ed. *The Arts of Islam: Hayward Gallery 8 April-4 July 1976*, 312.

⁵⁴ *Nasayih-i Iskandar*. Probably Herat, dated 1425. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. 36 Fol., written in *Nastaliq*. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS. 4183, f.12a.

⁵⁵ *Nasayih-i Iskandar*. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS. 4183, f.12 a.

⁵⁶ Lentz and Lowry, 12, 328.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 328.

⁵⁹ Religious scholars, the learned class, Sunni clerics. The early 15th century, was a time for spiritual ferment, which was supported by *ulema*, and which aroused a variety of heterodox religious movements.

⁶⁰ Schools and universities devoted to theology and canon law. Madrasas were one of the most powerful institutions that often modeled the culture of the society. Timurid princes, were genuinely interested in *sharia* (Islamic law based principally on Qur'an and *hadith* [Saying of the Prophet]) and took intense interest in spiritual matters. Iskandar Sultan regularly consulted and questioned on metaphysical issues such as: the nature of love, or who is Satan and was the *miraj* (Prophet Muhammad's ascent to heaven) spiritual or physical, with the members of *Ulema*, *pirs* (Sufi masters), and *shaykhs* who were associated with the *madrasas*. Many of his thoughts are noted in his (now lost) *Jami al-Sultani* (Royal chronicles).

Lentz and Lowry, 81, 92-94.

⁶¹ Ibid., 93.

- ⁶² Religious group that believed in mysticism, Shiite clerics. Timur cultivated the good will of the *sufi shaykhs* and their followers by building a magnificent mausoleum of *sufi shaykh* and poet Ahmad Yasawi in town of Yasi in 1397.
- ⁶³ Francis Robinson ed., *Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 54-55.
- ⁶⁴ Lentz and Lowry, 20, 32-34.
- ⁶⁵ Ibn Arabshah, *Tamerlane or Timur the Great Amir, from the Arabic Life of Ahmed ibn Arabshah* trans. J. H. Saunders (London: Luzac & co., 1936), 234; Lentz and Lowry, 12-14, 32-34, 80, 310; Atil, 12-13.
- ⁶⁶ Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, 218-300.
- ⁶⁷ David Nicholas, *Medieval Flanders* (London: Longman group UK, 1992), 357-66; Lentz and Lowry, 17, 20, 32-33.
- ⁶⁸ Terry Allen, *A Catalogue of the Toponyms and Monuments of Timurid Herat*, Studies in Islamic Architecture, no. 1 (Cambridge, Mass: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1981), 18-22.
- ⁶⁹ Sheila R. Canby, *Persian Painting* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 62-64.
- ⁷⁰ Basil Gray, *Persian Painting* (Geneva: Brooking International, 1995), 101; and Wheeler Thackston, *Album Prefaces and Other Documents on the History of Calligraphers and painters* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2110) 53-58.
- ⁷¹ Gray, *Persian Painting*, 11.
- ⁷² M. Ugur Derman, *Letters in Gold* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art 1998) 6, 11; Rosanna M. Giammanco Frongia trans., *Arabic Script: Styles variants and Calligraphic adaptations* translated from Italian (New York: Abbeville Press, 2001), 14.
- ⁷³ Fatmids claim their heritage from the Prophet's daughter Fatimah. They established themselves in Ifriqiyah in 909.
- ⁷⁴ Abd al-Rehman founded the Umayyad dynasty in Cordoba, Spain in 756 and ruled it for two and half centuries. Under Abd al-Rehman III (912-61), Umayyads achieved a period of great prosperity and brilliance.
- ⁷⁵ Various Muslim dynasties were established around tenth century such as: Ghaznavid, Samanid, and Tahirid. The major centers that produced exquisite pottery ware Nishapur, Khorasan, Bukhara, Rayy, Saveh and Hira.
- ⁷⁶ After conquest of Samarqand in 751 Ziyad ibn Salih (belonged to Abbasids khaliphate 740-1258) was instrumental in importing paper. Later Seljuks (1092-1308) in central Asia and Iran produced excellent quality paper and established *varrakdar* (stationers) who sold paper to local workshops and also exported the paper to other Islamic dynasties. Derman, 6, 11.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid.
- ⁷⁸ De Hamel, 16.
- ⁷⁹ Derman, 6, 11.
- ⁸⁰ Role and artistic vocabulary of *kitabkhana* is discussed in Chapter three and four.
- ⁸¹ Document from a Timurid *kitabkhana*. It is speculated by Wheeler Thackston to have been written by Jafar Tabrizi who was head of Baysunghur's artistic institution. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H.2153, f.98a. Lentz and Lowry, 364.
- ⁸² Lentz and Lowry, 189-205. *Arzadasht* is discussed in the Chapter III, Section B, under the heading "CALLIGRAPHY".
- ⁸³ See Chart 2.

⁸⁴ Art historians: Basil Gray, 115, 127, Sheila Canby, *The Golden Age of Persian Art* (London: British Museum Press, 1999), 6; Norah M. Titley, *Persian Miniature Painting* (Austin: University of Texas Press & British Library, 1983), 79.

⁸⁵ According to Barbara Brend, the establishment of Safavid dynasty was of fundamental importance for modern Iran because Safavids formed a country (which exist as Iran today) and *Shiism* was established as a national religion. The Safavid's heritage is traced back from the *sufi Shaykh* Safi al-Din (1252-1334), who founded a dervish order in Ardabil, northwest Iran. In the late 15th century his descendents managed to overthrow the Turkoman in western Iran and eastern Anatolia; Shah Ismail bin Hayder, a charismatic leader conquered Tabriz establishing the Safavid dynasty in 1501.

Barbara Brend, *Islamic Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 148.

⁸⁶ Sheila Canby believes that the Golden Age of Persian paintings began with the Safavid dynasty.

Canby, *The Golden Age of Persian Art* 6; "Shahnama Paintings at British Museum" *Oriental Art Magazine* Vol. 40, Date: Summer 1994, 29-30.

CHAPTER 3

Section A

BURGUNDIAN MANUSCRIPTS OF ALEXANDER **Page Schematics and Marginalia**

Interest in the history of Alexander was revived in Europe in the fifteenth century, hence numerous manuscripts were commissioned of Vasco da Lucena's French version of *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant* (ca. 1461-68). The beautifully preserved Getty manuscript *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant*, (1470-79, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Ludwig XV 8) is a perfect example of the large non-liturgical lectern¹ volumes that were made in the mid-fifteenth century by book producers in the Burgundian Netherlands.

Most hand-painted manuscripts of non-liturgical texts such as the history of Alexander the Great, had a standardized appearance, with the text arranged in a grid pattern, and illumination following a certain compositional formula. This helped in the development of hierarchical schemes of various elements in the decoration of manuscripts, which established the formula for page design schematics.²

PAGE SCHEMATICS

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the relationship of the various parts of the miniature, the accentuated initial, the placement of text, and the marginalia, provided the so-called *mis-en-page*, a characteristic layout that was developed for non-liturgical manuscripts. As dependence on the written word increased,³ combined with an increased sensitivity to esthetics, various devices were developed to mark meaningful divisions of the text. Accented initials, text column arrangements, along with the size and

style of text became important elements in the schematics of page design. The decoration of accentuated initials of varying sizes at the beginning of a book or chapter or at the beginning of a paragraph denoting the importance of the subject matter, formed a part of the visual vocabulary, and helped in the standardization of the decorative page design program. Placing the initial letter beneath the illustration panel also became an important standard element.⁴

The Getty manuscript contains most of these standard *mis-en-page* elements. It also contains another standard component of Burgundian manuscripts: the presentation scene located at the beginning of the manuscript, a beautiful, almost full page miniature entitled “Vasco Da Lucena Presenting His Translation to Charles the Bold” adorning the first frontispiece of the volume. There are in total eleven large miniatures accompanied by full marginalia decoration, and three one-column miniatures. The rest of the text pages are speciously arranged in two columns, with approximately thirty-two lines on each page in black ink, with chapter headings and folio numbers written in red ink. The Getty’s manuscript text is formal, which is generally termed as formal book script or *textualis* written in Minuscule scripts with long ascenders and descenders extending above and below the body of the letters.⁵

There are two columns of text on each page. On three pages of the manuscript a small miniature is added within one column of text, with border decoration above and below that column only where the small illustration is added; and the other column is left bare without any border decoration. This

small illumination, fourteen lines tall, is large enough to fit within the width of the column. An accentuated initial letter, four lines high, decorated with vines and floral patterns, rests below the small, column wide illumination.

[Plate 10]

Other numerous foliated initials are one to six lines tall. [Plate 10] Most text pages do not have full marginalia designs. Some have little flowering branches protruding out of the accented initials, and some have column-wide marginalia designs at the top and the bottom of the columns. These small border designs have similar patterns and colors as the marginalia designs of the large illumination pages; thus a thematic continuity is carried throughout all volumes.

All eleven large illuminations are placed more towards the upper left-hand corner of the page, in a rectangular form with a semi-arched window on the top. This formula creates an illusion of a window, looking in towards the contemporary events. Below the illustration, four or five lines of red text are arranged across the window, and then, starting with an accentuated initial letter, the rest of the copy is arranged in two columns in black ink. In the Getty manuscript the repertory of initials was used in a strict hierarchical order, with larger, more elaborate letters opening major sections of the text, often following the miniatures, while smaller ones indicated subordinate parts of sentences and paragraph notations.⁶

Burgundian artists borrowed the convention of an accentuated letter, introducing a chapter or a paragraph from Late Antiquity or the Early Christian period when such letters were used in conjunction with the new

codex format.⁷ These initials were embellished with beautiful decorations that combined plant-forms, vine scrolls, and tendrils, with floral motifs mostly executed in the same ink as the text. Many other Alexander manuscripts also contain beautiful accentuated initials, for example the version by the Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, MS 53; Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS fr. 257; London, British Library, MS 17; and many more.

In the Getty manuscript the large initials are encased in a rectangle with square fluted corners jutting out. [Plate 10] The most striking feature of these initials is their full and fresh coloring in which combinations of blue, red, and brown vine-like floral decorations are accentuated against a gilded background and are outlined in black. The initial letter is painted in a beautiful rust-brown color with white filigree designs which end in scroll-like patterns. These initial decorations are highly refined and complement the marginal decorations. The designs, when not burnished in gold, imitate mural *carrel ages* and chequers, or emulate engraved traceries on metal.⁸

Beside text arrangement and the use of an accentuated letter, marginalia were another important element of page decoration. A new vitality was instilled in border decorations by northern and southern Netherlandish illumination. Burgundian artists were influenced by their neighbors and adopted some of the techniques of marginal decoration from Netherlandish illuminators. In the fifteenth century, many sumptuous naturalistic borders that framed the text and illustrations combined beautiful sprays of leaves (usually acanthus), buds, flowers (Los Angeles, Ludwig XV

8), shells, birds (Paris, Bib. Nat., MS 257),⁹ deer, lions,¹⁰ as well as composite figures (Paris, Bib. Nat., MS fr. 331),¹¹ and narrative scenes (Cologne, Bib. Bodmeriana, Cod. 53; Paris, Bib. Nat., MS. fr. 257; and Paris, Bib. Nat., MS. fr. 1026).

CALLIGRAPHY

The signature of Jan du Quesne appears at the end of the introductory table of contents in the Getty manuscript. The manuscript is not dated, but McKendrick speculates that it was written between 1468-79, because of the style of the signature of the scribe.¹² Jan du Quesne's script has many similarities to the scripts found in two manuscripts signed by David Aubert, one in Brussels and the other in Ghent. The similarity in the style, elaboration of certain forms, and horizontal elongation of the "s" along with addition of serifs to the letters "d" and "t", suggests that Jan du Quesne may have been trained under the tutelage of David Aubert. The Getty manuscript was written in Lille in the *lettre bourguignonne* script often found in large vernacular lecterns at that time.

As literacy among Europeans increased due to economic prosperity, it also had an impact on the decoration of marginalia, foliated initials, and most importantly, on calligraphic text. With the increased production of both liturgical and non-liturgical literature, focus shifted from the spoken word to the written word, which in turn helped in the development of new textual organization and marginal imagery.¹³

The use of beautiful but convoluted letter decoration, as well as the deformation of letter or text common in early medieval and Gothic

manuscripts was abandoned. The device of pushing illustration or complicated initial letter decorations outside prescribed boundaries and incorporating them in marginalia designs, started around 1130 in the great Bury Bible¹⁴ painted for the monks of Bury St. Edmunds,¹⁵ was also abandoned.

As a part of the visual unit, the physicality of written words such as clarity and legibility of the letters became more important and a more systematic approach to text organization was adopted.

MARGINAL DECORATIONS

Up until the second half of the thirteenth century, many illuminations and marginal decorations were done by the same artist, but as the demand for these large lectern volumes increased, the production of one manuscript became a collaborative project by several artisans.¹⁶ Different artists, expert in their own specialized fields, worked on various elements of the book. Generally a scribe wrote the text observing the grid of ruled lines, followed by an artist restricting his drawings within the marginal boundaries, never stepping outside (i.e. inside the text) of the prescribed frame, and then an illuminator painted the main illustration. This order was not always followed and most of the time these artists worked independently of each other without communication. That is why many times the marginal designs do not always correspond to the text or illuminations.

Another important aspect of marginal decoration was the uniformity of images and style. Marginal images do not always correspond to the written text but rather they reflect the continuity of imagery not just across a single

page, but by linking forms and motifs throughout the whole manuscript or book.¹⁷ In most Alexander manuscripts one can detect thematic links running through sections of all volumes e.g., the artist of the Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, Jena, MS El.; Geneva, MS. Bodmer 53; Vienna, MS 2566; and Anonymous South Netherlandish artist, Paris MS fr.257; and London MS 17 F I. Examining the Getty manuscript one can see the uniformity of marginalia throughout. Though all the margin designs are not identical, and variations of berries, buds, flowers, and leaves are incorporated on different pages, nonetheless the overall design patterns, identical color schemes and inclusion of similar elements make the design appearance harmoniously uniform.

The status of most medieval artists was not measured in terms of their inventive nature but rather how they could incorporate traditional subject matter in new and challenging ways.¹⁸ In the first decade of fifteenth century Flemish and Netherlandish artists took up this challenge and, partially influenced by the Italian border designs, incorporated large vines and acanthus leaves superseding the ivy that was popular in the early medieval period.¹⁹ Thus these artists did not invent anything totally new, but rather they refined and redefined old traditional designs. This transitional stage is said to have been due to the school of Jan van Eyck (ca. 1390-1441), but no proof is forthcoming that Jan van Eyck ever worked on illumination; instead Bradley suggests such a stage could probably be a result of the influence of artists from Bruges.²⁰

This transitory stage gave birth to the Burgundian style. Western Europe was divided into small principalities that were connected by various dynastic forces. Because of political interconnections, one observes the intermingling of various styles in art and the influence of North and South Netherlands as well as French and Italian styles in the Burgundian manuscript decorations. The Burgundian style marks the beginning of the end of the Gothic tradition of image making and coincided with the rise of illusionistic space in fifteenth-century manuscript painting and marginal designs.

The Master of Margaret of York (worked in Bruges around 1470-75) was named after the Burgundian royal patron of arts Margaret of York (daughter in-law of Philip the Good and wife of Charles the Bold), and most likely worked in Bruges. In his marginalia decorations the artist interwove small colorful flowers among the black and gold acanthus leaves. The borders of many of his Alexander manuscripts also consisted of blue and gold acanthus leaves enlivened here and there with small animals and birds (Jena, Thuringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MS El. Fol. 89, Fol.2; and Cologne, Bib. Bodmeriana, Cod. 53, Fol. 3 ²¹). Such marginal decoration was typically executed in Bruges in the mid-fifteenth century and thus suggests that the artist and his shop may also have been located in this town.²²

Another example of marginal decoration that represented the Bruges style consisted of small, delicately painted grotesques. In some codices the marginal decoration consisted exclusively of black and gold acanthus leaves

(such as Brussels B. R. IV91) with some grotesque figures woven among them, whereas in other manuscripts they alternated with acanthus borders painted in gold and blue. These were splendid examples of marginalia decorations complemented by miniatures partly painted in *grisaille*²³ or *camaïeu gris*²⁴ and partly in color.²⁵ The roots of *grisaille* or *camaïeu gris* goes back to stained glass and especially to the grand stained glass windows of the Gothic cathedrals.

The artist of the Getty manuscript is not known but the style of the illumination and marginalia decoration clearly suggests that the artist may have worked in or around Bruges.²⁶ The exceptional quality of the Getty manuscript is comparable to two manuscripts that were produced in Bruges: one for Charles the Bold in 1470s by Loyset Liedet from Bruges (Paris, MS fr. 22547) and the other for Jean II Count of Oettingen in 1490s by an unknown artist from Bruges (Geneva, Bodmer MS 53 fr. 76).²⁷

The border decorations in the Getty manuscript are painted in an alternating combination of primary colors: blue, red, and yellow. Furthermore, they are gilded with gold. An illusion of space is created by means of colorful arrays of realistic flora and fauna painted with cast shadows which produce a *trompe-l'oeil*²⁸ effect in the margins.²⁹ These delicately drawn ornamental borders mainly comprised of blue and yellow acanthus, vine scrolls, green leaves, flower buds, and various kinds of berries, painted on the plain surface of vellum, were altogether in the fashion of the

time.³⁰ The design and composition are well balanced and harmoniously colored.

Heraldry provided another source of ornamentation for marginalia, and many owners personalized their manuscripts by adding family shields and emblems in the margins.³¹ These personalized manuscripts added prestige to their family's social status. Three known Alexander's volumes are heavily personalized with the first owner's arms, emblems and initials that are incorporated as a part of the original design. (Copenhagen, Royal Lib. Thott MS 540; Paris, Bib. Nat., MS fr. 6440; and Vienna, Nat. Bib. MS 2556) One other manuscript (Paris, Bib. Nat., MS fr. 22547) is a documented commission that includes the arms of the first owner in the opening initial below the presentation illumination, "Vasco Da Lucena Presents His Translation to Charles the Bold".

One manuscript (Stockholm, Skokloster, MS 131) has the Cleves arms very roughly added in a space in the lower border accompanying the presentation miniature, and in other two manuscripts, (Jena, Thur. Uni. MS EL fol. 89; and Oxford Bod. Laud. misc. 751) the arms of Nassau-Vianden are clearly, also a later addition.³² The style of the personalization devices differs from the original illustration suggests that these were added at the point of sale; thus it verifies that Vasco's manuscripts were readily available for purchase from the booksellers.³³

Others personalized manuscripts bear early marks of ownership clearly do so *post factum*, by inserting owner's arms or initials in a previously empty space at the center of the marginalia on the first page. The over

painted arms in the marginalia around the presentation miniature is evident in the Getty's manuscripts. (Los Angeles, Getty, Ludwig XV8)

Most of the fifteenth-century Burgundian manuscripts such as the historical books of Alexander exemplified a synthesis of the Netherlandish, Flemish, French and Italian styles. As the demand for these manuscripts increased, book producers employed artists from all over Europe to work on the manuscripts. These artists incorporated their own unique styles in the production of these volumes and brought new vitality to the art of illumination and marginal decorations. Consequently, Burgundy stood in the forefront of producing great manuscripts that were highly prized throughout Europe.

¹ Reading desk; this term is also used in Christian architecture for reading desk from which scripture lessons were read in a church service. In the later medieval period movable lectern were commonly made from wood but also from bronze or brass. The prototype design developed in the 13th century is still in use today, in which a book-rest consists of an eagle with outspread wings, mounted on a baluster support.

² M.A. Michael, "Border, manuscript," *The Grove Dictionary of Art*. [on-line]; accessed 29 Jan. 2001; available from <http://www.groveart.com/tdaonline/articles/index.asp?S=T010085>; L. Randall, *Images in the Margins of Gothic Manuscripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 1-5.

³ Burgundy had large wealthy urban population, and literacy among the bourgeois was very high. Because of high literacy, there was a shift from an oral culture to a written culture.

⁴ Robert G. Calkins, "Initial, manuscript," *The Grove Dictionary of Art*. [on-line]; accessed 29 Jan. 2001; available from <http://www.groveart.com/tdaonline/articles/index.asp?level=T041322> 1-3.

⁵ Michelle Brown, *Understanding Illuminated Manuscripts* (Malibu: The J. P. Getty Museum in association with The British Library, 1995) 115.

In the 15th century the scripts underwent quite a reform cycle and in doing so laid the foundation for many early typefaces.

⁶ Calkins, "Initial, manuscript," 29 Jan. 2001, online, available from <http://www.groveart.com/tdaonline/articles/index.asp?level=T041322> 1-3; J. J. G. Alexander, *The Decorated Letter* (New York: G. Braziller, 1978), n.pag.

⁷ Otto Pächt, *Book Illumination in the Middle Ages* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1994), 9-31; Christopher De Hamel, *Medieval Craftsmen Scribes and Illuminators* (Toronto: University of Toronto press, 1994), 45.

⁸ John Bradley, *Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Bracken Books, 1996), 123-33.

⁹ Anonymous south Netherlandish artist, ca. 1475. Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS fr. 257. Fol. 114v. Roosters and other birds are incorporated in the natural foliage with acanthus leaves.

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- ¹⁰ The lion was an important symbol and represented strength and valor. The lion also symbolized Alexander's courage.
- ¹¹ Lieven van Lathem, ca. 1470. Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS fr. 331. fol., 139v. The marginalia contain a naturalistic hunting scene and also a half-lion/half-woman playing a harp.
- ¹² Scot McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996), 29-32.
- ¹³ Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1992), 18-21.
- ¹⁴ *The Bury Bible*. 51.4 x 35.5 cm. Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 2. Fol. 34r.
- ¹⁵ Camille, *Image on the Edge*, 18.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.
- ¹⁷ William de Brailes was a pioneer in the early development of border decoration. He combined both painted as well as pen-work border designs that were arranged over a double-page opening which framed the text, helping to lead the eye from one page to the next. M.A. Michael, "Border, manuscript," *The Grove Dictionary of Art*. Online; Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts, 1285-1385* (London: H. Miller Publishers, 1986), 1-5.
- ¹⁸ Camille, *Image on the Edge*, 36.
- ¹⁹ Bradley, *Illuminated Manuscripts*, 202.
- ²⁰ Bruges was a major center for production of Burgundian manuscripts and many artists had their atelier in Bruges.
- Ibid.*, 141-43.
- ²¹ *Birth of Alexander the Great*. ca. 1470-75. Jena, Thuringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MS E1. Fol. 89, Fol.2 (detail).
- Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre*. ca. 1470-75. Cologne, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, Cod. 53.
- ²² Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting*, 113.
- ²³ An artwork executed in various shades of gray.
- ²⁴ An artwork rendered in several shades of a single color. This style of artwork imitates bas relief in the manner of cameos. The term is also used for a painting in two or three tints, in which objects do not represent their natural hues.
- ²⁵ Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting*, 99-101.
- ²⁶ McKendrick, 34-45.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ A French term meaning deception of the eye. A painting so realistic in nature that it may fool the viewer into thinking that the object represented are real rather than painted. The term is referred to a style of painting known as *illusionism*: creating the illusion of reality.
- ²⁹ Bradley, *Illuminated Manuscripts*, 195-207.
- ³⁰ The 15th century manuscripts of Alexander (Jena, MS E1.; Geneva, MS. Bodmer 53; Paris MS fr.257; and London MS 17 F I) are decorated with almost same elements and similar color schematics as the Getty manuscript.
- ³¹ See Chapter II, endnote 31.
- Eva Wilson, "Ornament and Pattern. Western, Medieval," *The Grove Dictionary of Art*. Jan. 29, 2001, Online.
- ³² McKendrick, 24-25.
- ³³ L. Campbell, "The Art Market in the Southern Netherlands in the Fifteenth Century," *Burlington Magazine* 118 (1976), 194-96.

CHAPTER 3

Section B

TIMURID MANUSCRIPTS OF THE SHAHNAMA AND THE KHAMSA Page Schematics, Frontispiece, and Marginalia

Timurid art is characterized by the extensive use of decoration. Such decorative patterns had a distinctive schematic organization, and different patterns were employed in decorating the surfaces of various mediums. The illumination of frontispiece and marginalia using a variety of embellishments took on a new elegant form under the Timurids. These design schematics had many external influences¹ which helped to refine the decorative objectives, but the principal style still adhered primarily to the Timurid *kitabkhana* traditions.

Illumination in royal books redefined and elaborated on earlier formulas employed by the Il-Khanids,² Jalayrids,³ Mamluks,⁴ and Muzaffarids.⁵ Nevertheless, the Timurids still managed to establish excellence within the pre-established mode.⁶ The luxurious manuscripts of Jalayrids had a refined and lyrical style that provided the foundation for Timurid book illumination under Shah Rukh and Iskandar Sultan.⁷ Jalayrids had developed a creative formula for marginalia designs, using *Siyah-qalami*, (black line drawing) rendered with fine brushwork in black ink, accented with little touches of blue and gold. Earlier marginal designs were created with opaque pigments, but Jalayrid marginalia were rendered in elegant calligraphic lines,⁸ validating their fine draughtsmanship on highly polished paper with pastoral scenes with flock of geese; an old man

accompanied by a woman carrying an infant; or herdsman with water buffalo; creating scenes of nomadic life.⁹ [Illustration 6]

Timurid artists adapted many Jalayrid elements incorporating them in their manuscript illuminations and marginalia designs. The manuscript prepared for Timurid prince Iskandar in 1410 reveals *Siyah-qalami* tinted with touch of gold color and other manuscript, whole page drawings at the end of the *Shahnama* prepared for Ibrahim Sultan around 1435 are also executed in the same manner. This style of marginal drawings is unique: For instance, in conventional manuscripts the focus is on the illumination in center of the page, thereupon, the eyes travel toward the outer edges, to the text and then to the marginalia. The opposite is true of this style, where the main focus is on the marginal designs towards the outer edges of the page, designs which are executed with magnificent *Siyah-qalami*; then the focus is pulled to the center where text is placed. According to Gray these drawings combine Chinese traditions evident in the treatment of animals and birds, new Iranian iconography evident in the treatment of trees and rocks, and some European touches confined to the faces of some of the figures.¹⁰

The Timurids had a tendency towards standardization, creating a uniform visual vocabulary, which is apparent in their decorative styles. Although their frontispieces and marginalia have a complex and wide variety of designs, they still adhere to certain design formulas that were practiced by the *kitabkhana* at that time.¹¹ (New York, The Metropolitan Museum, MS 9. Fol. 245 a & b) [Illustration 7] Great amounts of technical material preserved in various albums such as the Diez album in the Staatsbibliothek,

Berlin, and others in the Topkapi Sarayi Library, Istanbul (album H.2152),¹² reveal the nature of standardization. [Illustration 8]

These albums contain sketches and drawings that show the process of how these images were created from conception to execution. Furthermore, these sketches and drawings emphasize the systematic nature of Timurid art that eventually defined the visual vocabulary.¹³ These design components relied on repetition and consistency of form for their esthetic effects. Though the artists followed the dictums of standardization, they still exhibited immense diversity in their decorative ornamentation. They continued to exhibit innovation even while rigorously appropriating and codifying earlier forms.

One of the techniques that *kitabkhana* employed for embellishment of their manuscripts was stenciling. The stenciling technique was very useful in creating repeated non-figural designs such as floral arabesques, and various shapes of medallions and cartouches. Although the stenciling technique was not invented by the *kitabkhana*, the nature of the technique was well suited for the Timurid's inclination for visual standardization that helped to codify a variety of designs.

They used this stenciling technique in the most innovative fashion. With the combination of gilding and stenciling, they created an array of geometric and vegetal openwork patterns.¹⁴ Beside manuscript frontispieces and marginalia, these non-figural patterns were also incorporated in the designs of polychrome tile mosaics which became a trademark of new Timurid architecture.¹⁵ [Illustration 9] In addition to manuscripts and tiles,

these beautiful designs were also used in carpets, incorporated in intricate metal works, and carved on wooden doors.

Floral arabesques were a prominent feature in most Timurid design patterns. Flowers are one of the most important Islamic symbols denoting the divine realm. They are crucial in both the esthetic as well as poetic vocabulary, and both poets¹⁶ and artists pay their greatest homage to flowers. Flowers assume religious as well as cosmological significance by its connotation to the ultimate garden, the paradise. In Persian poetry, flowers are often described as springing out of the water from Paradise, and from time to time flowers and heaven become synonymous with each other.¹⁷

In spite of the Timurid inclination towards standardization, the artists were able to use the decorative format as an important vehicle for their individual expression. Artists achieved perfection through the modeling and calligraphic modulation of lines, utilizing the fine brushes and pens in *siyah-qalami* (black-line drawing).¹⁸

The range of artistic creativity and imagination, in spite their inclination towards standardization is evident in the illuminated frontispieces of *Khamasa*,¹⁹ (New York, The Metropolitan Museum, MS 9. Fol. 245 A [Illustration 7] & B); and *Shahnama*,²⁰ (Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, MS 66 A & B) [Illustration 10 A & B] which combine both fine calligraphic lines²¹ and various other design components, including calligraphy and figural, as well as floral, geometric, and vegetal elements.²² Sometimes calligraphy became such an integral part of the design that it was

difficult to distinguish between the calligraphic letters and other design components.²³

The illuminated title page of the *Khamisa* of Nizami (New York, The Metropolitan Museum, MS 9. Fol. 245 A²⁴ [Illustration 7] & B) and many others²⁵ executed by Timurid artists in Herat in the fifteenth century, demonstrate the emphasis placed on the superiority of the design, and shows how the vocabulary from earlier times²⁶ seems to have been transformed and revitalized. The Arab school of painting had flourished in the early thirteenth century and Mamluks produced the finest quality Qur'an with complex arabesque designs; borders illuminated with adaptation of lotus and peony motifs of Chinese origin on their frontispiece and surah headings; and polylobed cartouches filled with stylized *Kufic* script, were placed on top and bottom of the page.²⁷ Timurids adapted the same formula that Mamluks incorporated in their Qur'ans, and because of their propensity for extensive use of decorations they refined Mamluk designs and made it more elegant.

It is probable that the Timurid prince Baysunghur (1397-1433) commissioned this *Khamisa* (New York, The Metropolitan Museum, MS 9. Fol. 245 A [Illustration 7] & B) of which this illuminated frontispiece is a part. Baysunghur was the most prolific patron of the arts and under him numerous liturgical as well as non-liturgical manuscripts were produced. The frontispiece is on a double page spread (*dibacha*), which is made to look like one single composition. Each page design is divided into three sections both vertically and horizontally, with the text in the central part. The text is articulated into two columns, written in the exceptionally elegant *Nastaliq*

script, used in all Iranian manuscripts at that time. A cloud like border frame in black and gold (*tahrir*) surrounds the text, which is sprinkled with tiny gold dots (*tarsi*). The exterior panels are predominantly decorated with a delicately drawn colored plant motif (*islimi-imari*) on a cobalt blue and gold background. Two white rectangular cartouches edged with graceful cloud collarpoint which repose in the center of the two upper and lower horizontal panels are also decorated with fine filigree work. Beautifully written chapter headings in open *Kufic* script rest in the center of these cartouches. This is a perfect example of the decorative nature of Timurid art in the fifteenth century by the illuminators from the Herat school that emphasizes graceful harmony, beauty, and elegance.

Another good example that fits within the same artistic genre is the *Shahnama*²⁸ (St. Petersburg, Asiatic Department, Cat. PTR, 1964 no. 2293. Fol. 9v-10r) [Illustration 11 A & B] copied in mid fifteenth century from Herat, which has a similar decorative style and page schematics of the *Khamasa* (MS 9. Fol. 245 A & B) [Illustration 7]. It has been suggested,²⁹ the *Shahnama* (Cat. PTR, 1964 no. 2293. Fol. 9v-10r) was probably designed in the Herat school as well. The manuscript is richly decorated and its double-page frontispiece (*dibacha*) [Illustration 11 A & B] has a unified design that looks like one single elegant composition. Furthermore, like the *Khamasa* [Illustration 7], the page is divided into three sections both horizontally and vertically. It seems evident after observing these schematics of frontispiece design that these types of page representations with plant motif designs and

multicolored decorations are typical of most frontispieces in the fifteenth century from Herat with some variations added by individual artists.³⁰

Like the *Khamasa* (M.9 Fol.245 a & b) [Illustration 7], frontispieces of the *Shahnama*³¹ [Illustration 11 A & B] (Cat. PTR, 1964 no. 2293, Fol.9v-10r) and other similar manuscripts³² have in most parts a deep blue background which is decorated with a polychrome band of plant motifs (*islami-i bargi* and *gul-i khata'i*). Both top and bottom rectangular panels are accentuated with cartouches surrounded by geometric decorative patterns. On Fol. 9v in the

top panel cartouche, the  | *Bismillah Irrahma*

*Nirraheem*³³ is written, whereas other cartouches contain the name of the poet and the title of the book. The calligraphy is rendered in white, a perfect contrast against the deep blue background, using stylized floral *Kufic* script. In the center field, the body of text is placed in two columns, written in superb *Nastaliq*, which is a little angular in style.³⁴ There is no mention of the name of the calligrapher, but the style suggests that it was written by a very accomplished scribe from the *kitabkhana* of Ja'far al-Tabrizi al-Bausunghuri around the mid-fifteenth century.³⁵

One more frontispiece of the *Khamasa*³⁶ (London, British Library, BL. Or. 6810, f.3b) [Illustration 12] commissioned as a gift for Ali Farsi Barlas, (d. 1500) the Timurid ruler of Samarqand, is a perfect example of typical Persian arabesque design. The page schematic is similar to the rest of the above mentioned frontispieces with delicate designs drawn with infinite fineness and clarity around the borders, rectangles, and cartouches. The deep blue of

the lapis lazuli background is accented with gold, and the rest of the details are added with white, black, green, red, and brown. The white fine lines in and around the outer border create a delicate knot design.

Another example of an illuminated page from the *Khamasa*,³⁷ (St. Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000) [Illustration 13] commissioned by Shah Rukh Sultan, reveals the influence of poetic paintings. This volume lacked the brilliance of the manuscripts of Baysunghur, the son of Shah Rukh, but there are many similarities in the style and composition that suggest that both father and son may have shared illuminators and calligraphers as well as materials from a common *kitabkhana*.³⁸

The soft modulated coloring, and the detail of decorations of the *Khamasa*³⁹ [Illustration 13] are also similar to the *Shahnama* decorations [Illustration 10 A & B] (Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, M.66 A & B).

One particular folio (M.66 A) [Illustration 10 A] in the *Shahnama* (Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, M.66 A & B) raised considerable speculation over the European influence perhaps Italian or Flemish in its illumination. The embellishments in marginalia (M.66 A) include, figure of an angel lassoing other angel on horseback and heads of exotic animals interwoven among the vegetal design. Figures of the angels, the horses and the animal heads are rendered in the European style: they have three-dimensionality and shaded to look lifelike.⁴⁰ Examining the records of the number of European travelers who visited Persia during the fifteenth century, it is possible that some European influence may have penetrated in

this *Shahnama*.⁴¹ Gray, relying on Professor Rice's reference to the trading practices of the Timurids with the Venetians and the Genoese, suggests the possibility of the European or at least Mediterranean influences in Timurid illuminations.⁴²

Beside the minor influence from Europe, influences from East Asia and, in particular, China played a major role in Timurid's decorative schemes. The exchange of ambassadors between Timurid Iran and the Ming dynasty's Imperial Chinese court at Khanbaliq (Beijing) around 1419 eased tensions. A kind of political stability was achieved because of the dynastic prosperity of both countries. The diplomatic and commercial exchanges⁴³ with the Ming dynasty helped the Timurids to have access to Chinese art. They adapted many Chinese ornamentation practices into their own decorative vocabulary, yet the Timurid conception of drawing and the sinuous treatment of flowers and stems relied on that most Islamic of designs, the arabesque.⁴⁴

As an envoy of Baysunghur, the artist Ghiyath al-Din⁴⁵ accompanied the embassy of Shah Rukh to China in 1419-22.⁴⁶ An account of his journey to China records the profound impressions the Timurid delegation had regarding Chinese art. They were awestruck at the wealth and magnificence of imagery and ornamentation of Chinese art, and they brought back some of the Chinese artwork with them. Timurid artists used the embellishments of Chinese porcelain, furniture, and paintings as primary sources for their designs.⁴⁷ It is most likely that these magnificent designs inspired the decorative idioms of Timurid *kitabkhana*. Timurid artists assimilated the

Chinese style with their own Turco-Mongol-Persian style and created a whole new vocabulary of designs. They incorporated numerous Chinese motifs into the Timurid visual vocabulary including — qilin (mythical Chinese beast), lions, dragons, phoenixes, ducks, and cranes, along with swirling clouds, curving knotty trees, and the curious fungus which envelopes them, plus the craggy roots or rocks on which birds perch, and delicately ornamented vegetation.

Many of the album drawings, frontispieces, and marginalia designs demonstrate the inventive nature of the Timurid artists to synthesize Chinese flavor with Persian taste. These chinoiserie design elements include a series of intricately designed medallions,⁴⁸ graceful and elegant cloud collarpoint,⁴⁹ and various types of lobed, cusped, or scalloped frames.

The medallion design entitled, *Lobed Medallion with Animal Combat*⁵⁰ [Illustration 14] is cleverly arranged to accommodate the lobed outline of the medallion. This medallion convincingly demonstrates the Timurid artists' inventiveness in incorporating Chinese imagery into their own. A beautifully illustrated phoenix sweeps down and is attacked by the spotted leonine predator. This imagery is juxtaposed against the Chinese conventions. In Chinese art and literature the phoenix does not prey on living creatures. The phoenix did not have the same symbolism for the Timurids as it did for the Chinese. The Chinese had derived the image of phoenix from the oriental pheasant. The Iranian accepted the image of pheasant to represent auspicious *simurg*.⁵¹ *Simurg* was an ancient bird that represented beauty. The depiction of *simurg* goes back to the late Sassanian period in the Great

Grotto (rock-cut monument) at Taq-I Bustan where the image of *simurg* is carved on the living rock of the mountain in one of the *ivans*.⁵²

The medallion design entitled *Medallion with Peacock*⁵³ [Illustration 15] is another perfect example of Timurid artists borrowing imagery from the Chinese. Symmetry and the precision of lines are evident in this composition, with the peacock in the center, surrounded by whipping tendrils, fluttering leaves, and radiating flowers. In many Asian cultures, especially Indian, the peacock is a symbol of beauty. For the Iranians the image of *simurg* has metamorphousized into the peacock. The peacock was not a common decorative motif in Timurid art but later the Safavids adopted it to represent beauty and the Mughal (descendents of Genghis Khan and Timur) dynasty in India, the peacock became an important symbol that represented beauty.⁵⁴

The medallion *Cloud Collarpoint with Fantastic Plant* [Illustration 16 A & B] is a typical example of the chinoiserie fantasies admired by the Timurids.⁵⁵ The form representing the cloud band contains many animals symbolic to the Chinese that encompass a major part of the decorative vocabulary assembled by the *kitabkhana*. The collarpoint is arranged in a symmetrical form in accordance with Timurid design principles and drawn in sinuous lines that seem to be in continuous motion. These framing devices had been utilized in the Islamic world for a long time, but after the Mongol invasions their forms coincided more closely with Chinese styles.

Marginal design produced in Shiraz around the first quarter of the fifteenth century is a perfect example of the collaborative nature⁵⁶ of Timurid art that incorporated delicate chinoiserie⁵⁷ [Illustration 17]. The blending of

Chinese elements into Persian design created exquisite new effects that featured idyllic landscapes, animals in combat,⁵⁸ and mythical creatures. The elegant design is skillfully produced to fit within the narrow panel of the page. The marginalia accentuate rhythmic forms that are surrounded by exotic birds and animals. The rest of the space is filled with floral arabesques and swaying leaves delineated in beautiful calligraphic lines. These types of designs are reminiscent of technical material preserved in various albums such as Diaz album in the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin and other drawings in Topkapi Sarayi Library, Istanbul.⁵⁹ By the mid-fifteenth century these formulae, introduced by the artists of Iskandar Sultan and Baysunghur, had become established and codified.

Another component to this marginalia [Illustration 17] is the sharp angle in the frame, usually near a corner close to the bottom left side of the page. This may have been to accommodate the triangular thumb panels that often grace the edges of pages in the books made for the princes.⁶⁰

Balance and symmetry were the hallmark of Timurid artists, but now the new designs also added a free-flowing sense of fantasy that included freely drawn bird and flower motifs in their margins.⁶¹ [Illustration 18]⁶² This type of marginal design, characteristic of the Shiraz school, was created for Iskandar Sultan. These designs are drawn in fine lines and generally tinted with pale color washes.⁶³

Frontispiece and marginal designs from the Herat school have naturalistic tendencies instead of the sense of fantasy that was created by the Shiraz school. These designs were less ethereal in nature and more

universal. The manuscript⁶⁴ [Illustrated 13] and design sheets executed for both Shah Rukh and Baysunghur in the Herat school have a naturalistic palette yet they also have a flowing sense of rhythm and natural balance.

COLOR AND PAGE SCHEMATICS

Besides elegant form and graceful calligraphic lines, color played an important role in Timurid manuscript illuminations. Depth and purity of pigments gave a brilliant jewel-like quality to these illuminations. Deep blue was created by lapis lazuli, and other hues were made from other precious natural elements. The designs were accentuated with pure gold and silver and often entire pages were dotted with gold specks. The delicate calligraphic lines bespoke of lyricism, while the radiant color gave a luminous quality to the frontispieces and marginalia.⁶⁵ [*Khamisa* Illustration 7 & 12; and *Shahnama* Illustration 11 A & B]

In contrast, some manuscripts, especially frontispieces from Herat, were painted with a light wash of delicate translucent colors which give a very soft aura to the manuscript.⁶⁶ The flowers are lightly shaded and have some sense of three-dimensionality. The dynamic, brilliantly jewel-like, and radiantly colored illuminations mentioned above [*Khamisa* Illustration 7 & 12; and *Shahnama* Illustration 11 A & B] testify to the power and authority of the Timurid princes, while these soft colored frontispieces from Herat [*Khamisa* Illustration 13] suggest a peaceful serenity that existed in nature.

Most of the frontispiece page schematics fall under the Timurid sensibility of standardization in order to create uniform designs. Some frontispieces have no text at all, whereas other frontispieces synthesize part

text and part decoration. As shown in the earlier part of this chapter, most of these frontispiece designs have a double page spread that has the appearance of a single composition. Typically each frontispiece is divided into three sections, both horizontally and vertically, with the text in the center, articulated into two columns written in elegant *Nastaliq* script.

Other than frontispieces, most of the *Shahnama* and *Khamasa*'s main body of text is organized in four columns, written in *Nastaliq*. Earlier many of the illuminations were done in a rectangular box with text placed either at the top or bottom, or sometimes the illumination was sandwiched between the both the top and bottom.⁶⁷ Later, new schematics were developed where text was still divided in four columns but the picture box became irregular. Instead of a perfectly rectangular picture box, some columns became longer or shorter to accommodate elements such as a tall tree or a mountain, within the picture frame.⁶⁸ [Illustration 44A] The creator of a Timurid manuscript mostly followed the established page schematics, though he did not hesitate to make a few exceptions in the arrangement of the page layout by having an irregular picture box with uneven column lengths as mentioned above. In contrast, in all of the Burgundian manuscripts of Alexander the text columns were rigidly defined (without the unevenness of the Timurid's column structure) and were governed by a systematic approach to text organization; this uniformity of pages was properly maintained.⁶⁹

Finally, by the end of the fifteenth century, Timurid illustration sometimes took precedence over the text and only few lines of text were inserted within the picture frame.⁷⁰ [Illustration 37] The *Shahnama* (1420)

in Berlin has the four-column configuration but the text is also written in the various parts of the margins with an irregularly shaped picture window place within the text.⁷¹ [Illustration 19 A & B]

Il-khanid artists were first to brake away from the rigid four-column page schematic, and the fixed boundaries of the picture window were broken.⁷² Timurid artist continued with this concept, and now part of the illustration spilled into the marginalia and the marginalia became part of illumination.⁷³ They used this convention of flowers and trees into margin not for mere effects, but they were spread out into margins because that is the way they grew. This was in total contrast to the Burgundian manuscripts. The Burgundian manuscript had a well-defined picture box. The creators of Burgundian manuscripts had abandoned the device used by their predecessors that pushed illustration or complicated initial letter decoration outside the prescribed boundaries, incorporating them in the marginal designs.

Another component of marginalia is the sharp angle in the design to accommodate the triangular thumb panel that was often placed along the central edge of a page in manuscripts made for the prince.⁷⁴ In the early part of the fifteenth century, Iskandar Sultan employed this particular feature in many of his manuscripts produced in Shiraz [Illustration 17]. This particular feature is completely absent in Burgundian manuscripts. Most Burgundian manuscripts have *mis-en-page* schematics, a relationship between different components such as the miniature, accentuated initials, placement of text, and marginalia. Other differences between Burgundian (European) and

Islamic page schematics are that most Islamic manuscripts do not use the device of accentuating initial letters, which is an important element in all European manuscripts.

Up until the second half of the thirteenth century, for Timurid as well as Burgundian manuscripts, one artist painted both the illumination and marginalia decorations. As the demand for these luxurious manuscripts increased, the *kitabkhana* had specialized artists, each of whom tackled different components of manuscript production. Some artists were expert in painting flowers, some only painted landscapes, whereas others drew figures, and some only colored floral arabesques. Some artists were expert in tinting or gilding, and some just prepared the pages and drew guidelines.

For both Burgundian and Islamic manuscripts calligraphy was exclusively done by special scribes, but in Islamic cultures the master calligraphers achieved higher status than the painters did.

CALLIGRAPHY

Calligraphy became the most obvious of dynastic claims to the cultural prowess of the Timurids. Calligraphy is considered the highest form of art in the Islamic world. "Purity of writing is purity of soul," an old Arabic saying, reinforces the importance of the art of beautiful writing. The beautiful hand was encouraged and scribes aimed for balance, elegance, and harmony in their work. They dedicated their skills and sometimes their entire lives to their art.

By the end of the fourteenth century Iran was an especially fertile ground for calligraphic art and the scribes of royal *kitabkhana* developed a

new and elegant script. This delicate and slightly elongated script, *Nastaliq*, became the most fashionable hand for copying Farsi.⁷⁵ All non-liturgical⁷⁶ works such as the historical epics (*Shahnama* and *Khamasa* of Nizami) and Persian poetry were copied in *Nastaliq* as this new script was well suited for the Farsi language. The grammatical structure of Farsi language is slightly different from Arabic. Farsi words generally end with a rounded Arabic letter; *Nastaliq* script is designed with letters slightly slanted to accommodate the curve of the letters at the end.

Nastaliq is one of the most beautiful Islamic calligraphic scripts developed in Persia. In a span of one and half centuries the art of Arabic calligraphy was refined by various masters in Iran, Iraq, and Egypt. At the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century the disciples of Yaqut al-Musta simi (d. 1298) developed *aqlam as-sitta* (the six styles).⁷⁷ These *sitta* (six) basic styles are: *Naskh*, *Muhaqqaq*, *Thuluth*, *Tuaqi*, *Riqa*, and *Rihani*. Together these *sitta* styles provided calligraphers with a basic repertoire of new scripts, which then were used for different purposes.

Nastaliq is not a part of *aqlam as-sitta* (the six styles)⁷⁸ but it is interrelated to *Naskh*. The genesis of *Nastaliq* goes back to the “hanging style” called as *Taliq*. Mir Ali al-Tabrizi, a Jalayrid calligrapher in the beginning of the fifteenth century known as *qudwat al-kuttab* (the exemplary calligrapher), reconstructed the hanging style according to the calligraphic rules devised by ibn Muqla (d. 940).⁷⁹ In the formation of *Nastaliq*, he synthesized *Naskh* and *Taliq*, and created a new art form.⁸⁰ *Nastaliq* is an

elegant script with the fluidity of music that seems to dance to the inner rhythm of Persian poetry.

Baysunghur encouraged the use of this innovative script, which was used almost exclusively for manuscripts created for Timurid princes at that time and for all future non-religious manuscripts that were produced in Iran. In addition, Shah Rukh (1377-1447) and his sons Ibrahim Sultan (1394-1435) and Baysunghur were master calligraphers. Shah Rukh (Timur's son) followed in the footsteps of his father and continued to commission many manuscripts. One of his handwritten Qur'ans, measuring 65x45 cm. and written in *Rihani* script, is preserved in Shiraz (1405), and other copies of his calligraphic works are in the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

A number of calligraphic works by Baysunghur are preserved in the Topkapi album⁸¹ along with his *Fihrist-i khutut-i ustadan-i sab'a* (The Seven Masters Calligraphic Album).⁸² Baysunghur, besides being the master calligrapher himself, also employed forty scribes in his *kitabkhana*.⁸³ Under the leadership of Ja'far al-Tabrizi, who was also a master calligrapher in Baysunghur's *kitabkhana*, forty calligraphers were kept busy copying various manuscripts that were under production.⁸⁴

The *arzadasht* (petition, 1427-28)⁸⁵ [Illustration 20] confirms the existence of a large number of artists and calligraphers who were working for Baysunghur at his residence in the Bagh-i Safed, northeast of Herat. This document reports various activities of the *kitabkhana*. It is unclear who wrote this petition or to whom it was addressed but the internal evidence strongly suggests that it is a progress report to Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh

from Ja'far Tabrizi, the head director of the *kitabkhana*.⁸⁶ This is a progress report of the artistic activities in the *kitabkhana* (parts of the literal translation):

... [1]Mawlana Ali on the day this petition is being written is designing a *debacha* for *Shahnama*. His eyes were sore for few days. ... [5] Mawlana Qiawamuddin has finished the arabesques (*islami*) margins for the binding of the *Shahnama* and has taken up the brush for the pleasure scene (?*ayshi tamasha*) of the body of the binding. The groundwork (*bum*) is nearly two-third done; the "back and head and neck" (back and flap ?) have been attached *chaspanida* and *tariq* (groove?) has been drawn. ... [10] Khwaja Ata, the ruling maker (*jadwalkash*), has finished Mawlana Sa'duddin's *Tarikh* and the *Divan* of Khwaju and is busy with *Shahnama*. ... [13] Mawlana Muhammad ibn Mutahhar has finished writing 25,000 verses of the *Shahnama*. ... Your most humble servant, the most miserable speck of dust has finished writing three and half sections of the *Shahnama* and has begun to write the *Nuzhat al-arwah*.⁸⁷

Beautiful handwriting such as calligraphy became a true manifestation of spirituality. In the medieval period, religion provided the environment for artistic expression and art became a form of worship. One sees the art of Christian manuscript illuminations as being similar to Persian illuminations, both of which were closely related to mysticism. Sufism, which was popular during the Timurids, is closely related to mysticism. It is an esoteric form of Muslim faith that seeks a direct communication with God. It is an inward (*batin*) path of divine union, designed to complement the outward (*zahir*) approach of Islamic doctrine and law. Sufism is inward-focused and motivated by the ultimate goal of seeking the love of God and gaining his love. The Sufis were renowned poets and writers and beautiful writing⁸⁸ was an integral part of their belief.

In the fifteenth century, both religious as well as secular topics were delineated in the manuscripts. The historical books of Alexander became

very popular in the Western world, whereas epics such as the *Shahnama* and the *Khamisa* became equally popular with the Timurids. Both in Burgundian and Islamic manuscripts calligraphy became an important element of art and various devices were invented by both cultures to illustrate this beautiful writing.

The art of Islamic calligraphy is founded on a strict code of geometric and decorative rules. Calligraphers believed that their art was the geometry of the soul expressed through the body, a metaphor that could be taken literally. The art of calligraphy glorifies the hidden face of Allah, in the most sacred book, the Qur'an. Qur'an reveals the path of revelation, both in *zahir* (the manifest) and in *batin* (the hidden). The art of calligraphy is a part of the linguistic structure, derived from the language spoken by Allah, which is thus duplicated and transposed in a visual message.

Timurid's *kitabkhana* endeavored to create a uniform visual vocabulary, which is apparent in its wide variety of manuscripts. The artists strove to standardize the figural imagery portraying the stories of *Shahnama* and *Khamisa* of Nizami as well as the decorative styles of their marginalia and frontispiece. Though these illuminations, frontispieces, and marginalia had a complex and wide variety of designs, they still adhered to a certain design formula practiced by the *kitabkhana*. These brilliantly illuminated manuscripts bespoke a powerful political message, a typical Timurid practice of using art as a vehicle for royal propaganda — so to speak, a myriad of voices singing in unison. Though the political message was uniform in nature each manuscript had its own individual qualities, like a good tenor who

brings his own individuality to the opera, or a painter recreating a common theme who could not help but bring his own individual emotions to his creation.

¹ Both Asian and European influences will be discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

² The Il-Khanids were nomadic pastoral tribe from Mongolia. The powerful leader Changis (Genghis) Khan first attacked China then advancing westwards conquered the cities of Balkh, Heart and Nishapur ending the Abbasid caliphate in 1220. His successor, Hulagu established the Il-Khanid dynasty and declared Islam, the religion of state in 1295. They were great patrons of art. Jones and Michell state that the tradition of elaborate illustrated books of *Shahnama* started with the Mongols. During their illustrious rule for about one and a quarter century, they produced many historical writings such as (1) *Great Mongol Shahnama*, 1328-36. The folios of the *Great Mongol Shahnama* are scattered among: Washington D.C., Freer Gallery of Art; Cambridge, Harvard University Art Museum; (2) The large *Demotte Shahnama*, ca. 1336. Cambridge, Harvard University Art Museum and (3) *Jami al-Tawarikh*, 1306-7. Scotland, Edinburgh University Library. Il-Khanids passed their heritage of art of illuminated books to the Timurids.

Dalu Jones and George Michell ed. *The Arts of Islam: Hayward Gallery 8 April-4 July 1976* (London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1976), 310-11.

³ See Chapter 2 endnote 44. The list of manuscripts that provided inspiration for the Timurid manuscripts are: (1) *Divan*, of Sultan Ahmad Jalayr, illustrated in Baghdad, 1402-3. Washington DC, Freer Gallery of Art; (2) *Divan*, from Khwaju Kirmani, Baghdad, 1396. London, British library, MS Add 18113; (3) *Khamisa* of Nizami, Baghdad, 1386-88; (4) The first small *Shahnama* was produced in northwest Iran, early to mid fourteenth century. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS 104.61; (5) Second small *Shahnama*, produced in northwest Iran, early to mid fourteenth century. New York, The Brooklyn Museum.

⁴ In 1260 an army of slaves (Mamluk) defeated Mongols in Syria and emerged as the powerful dynasty that ruled Egypt, Syria, western Arabia and parts of Anatolia for two hundred and fifty years. Besides building great mosques and caravanserais, they produced intricately designed metal works, and most beautiful Qur'ans and manuscripts relating to mechanical and astrological subjects. Besides beautiful Qur'ans other manuscripts by the Mamluks that influenced the Timurid art of Illuminations are: (1) *Maqamat*, by Al-Hariri, Egypt or Syria, 1334; (2) *Automata*, by Al-Jazari, Egypt or Syria, 1315; (3) *Kitab al-Diryaq*, Mosul, Mid Thirteenth century; (4) *Stories of Abu Zaid in Maqamat* by al-Wasiti, Baghdad, 1237, (5) *Khalila wa Dimnah*, Egypt or Syria, 1354.

⁵ The Il-khanid dynasty ended around 1335, and various successor states struggled for power to control Iran. Eventually in 1353 the Muzaffarids (a dynasty of Arab origin) displaced the Inju dynasty (who ruled Fars) and ruled central and southwest Iran until 1393. Shiraz was a major center for the production of Muzaffarid manuscripts. Their distinctive style is apparent in a *Shahnama*, Shiraz, 1333. St. Petersburg, State Public Library, MS Dorn 329. and *Shahnama*, southwest Iran, 1371. Istanbul, Topkapi Palace library, MS H 1511.

⁶ Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles: The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), 198.

⁷ Early 15th century the *kitabkhana* at Herat produced some of the finest works. Timur had brought artists from the Jalayrid dynasty in Baghdad to Samarquand, now these artists were moved to Herat, bringing with them new vitality and technical expertise in implementing royal ideologies in their works at Herat *kitabkhana*. The *Khamasa* of Nizami, for Shah Rukh represents the mastery of the Sultan Ahmad Jalayrid's artists, with elegant calligraphic lines along with lyrical execution and codification of compositions.

Thomas Lentz, Jr. "Painting at Herat under Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh" Ph.D diss. (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1985), 121-34.

Khamasa of Nizami, for Shah Rukh, Herat, 1431. copied by Mahmud, St. Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum, VR-1000; *Khamasa*, Herat, 1438. Istanbul, Turk ve Islam Eserleri Musesi, MS. f. 60a.

⁸ Refer to endnote 21, Calligraphic lines.

⁹ *Divan*, of Sultan Ahmad Jalayr, Baghdad, 1402-5. illustrated by Junayd, Washington D.C., The Freer Gallery of Art, MS 32.35. The manuscript has wide margins and the last eight pages have the pictorial decoration filled with pastoral drawing of most exquisite quality, unique to the Iranian school of painting.

Basil Gray, *Persian Painting* (Geneva: Brooking International, 1995), 49, 52-53.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Frontispieces of *Khamasa*, written in *Nastaliq*, 8 lines arranged in two columns, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MS 9. Fol. 245 a & b. General information about the manuscript: *Khamasa* of Nizami, for Muhammad Husain, son of Muhammad Ibrahim, Herat, 1449-50. 25.5 x 16.0 cm. Written on paper, in beautiful medium-sized *Nastaliq*, 394 Folios, 19 lines to a page in four columns, ruled in gold with blue outline. Other examples, *Shahnama*, Herat, ca. 1440-50. 25.05 x 17.1 cm. Fine strong paper, 410 folios written in *Nastaliq*, 24 lines to a page in four columns, 74 miniatures. St. Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PT, 1964 no. 2293. Fol. 9v-10r; and *Khamasa* of Nizami, for Amir Ali Farsi Barlas, probably Herat, 1494-95. Illustrations painted by Bihzad or pupil of Bihzad, 25 x 17 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 203 Fol. with 22 illustrations, London, British Library, Or. 6810. Timurid artists created beautiful designs within the framework, making each individual piece different and unique. M. S. Diamond, *Handbook of Mohammedan* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1958), 49.

¹² Pages of preparatory drawings, sketches, and designs. Ink on paper, 68 x 50 cm. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, album H. 2152. Fol. 86 a.

The album has about fifteen pages of patterns, mainly arabesque designs, stylized birds and animal representations, framing devices, etc.

¹³ Marie Swietochowski, "The Development of Traditions of Book Illustration in Pre-Safavid Iran," *Iranian Studies* 2, nos. 1-2 (winter and spring 1974), 49-87.

¹⁴ Similar stenciling works are also on display in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

¹⁵ Tile mosaic. Wall panel of the shrine of Abdullah Ansari, Gazargah, ca. 1425-29.

¹⁶ Numerous poems have been written on the subject of flowers. Among them the most famous poetry is entitled *Gulistan* (Rose Garden). It is written by Hafiz, one of the greatest poets of Iran. Sufi Poets also gave importance to flowers and wrote many poems giving flowers a divine realm.

¹⁷ Jones and Michell ed. *The Arts of Islam: Hayward Gallery 8 April-4 July 1976*, 66.

¹⁸ Convention utilized first by Jalayrid artists and later adopted by the Timurid artists. The manuscript of Timurid prince Iskandar in 1410 and whole page drawings at the end of the *Shahnama*, prepared for Ibrahim Sultan around 1435 reveal *Siyah-qalami* tinted with touch of color.

¹⁹ *Khamisa* of Nizami, Herat, mid fifteenth century. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MS 9; and *Khamisa* of Nizami, Herat, 1494-5. London, British Library, BL. Or. 6810, f.3 b.

²⁰ *Shahnama*, Probably Herat, ca. 1425-50. 26.3 x 17.5 cm. Two Fol. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, most pages are dispersed, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, MS 66A & B.

²¹ Calligraphic lines are not same as calligraphy. Calligraphic lines are used to create an outline of the flowers, leaves, and branches, or outline any other element of design. They are created by the slanted point of *qalam* (pen) or fine brush creating elegant lines to facilitate a transition from the thick stroke to thin stroke in a smooth and graceful manner. Chinese painters used calligraphic line very effectively in their landscape paintings. The Timurids used it in *Siyah-qalami* and also in their illuminations with color pigments outlining designs with elegant calligraphic lines.

²² Both the manuscripts are discussed in detailed in the later part of this chapter.

²³ *Cloud Collarpoint with Kufic Medallion*. Iran, ca. 1400-1450. 42.5 x 35 cm. Opaque watercolor and ink on paper, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.54, #1.

²⁴ *Khamisa* of Nizami, Herat, mid-fifteenth century. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MS 9.

²⁵ Refer to endnote 11. (3 manuscripts: 2 *Khamisa* and 1 *Shahnama*).

²⁶ Refer to endnotes 2, 3, 4, and 5.

²⁷ Barbara Brend, *Islamic Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 114-20. Double page *Qur'an*, mid-fourteenth century. Mamluk, Cairo, National Library, MS 6,ff. 318v-319r.

²⁸ *Shahnama*, Herat, ca. 1440-50. St. Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PT, 1964 no. 2293. Fol. 9v-10r.

²⁹ Yuri Petrosyan et al., with essay by Marie Lukens Swietochowski, *Pages of Perfection: Islamic Paintings and Calligraphy from the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg* (St. Petersburg: ARCH Foundation, Electa, 1995), n.pag.

³⁰ This type of page layout and color schematic of frontispiece design were popular in 15th century, from Herat. Beside the *Khamisa* and the *Shahnama* these combination of page layout and color scheme were used for many other manuscripts. See Chart 3.

³¹ *Shahnama*, ca.1440-50. St. Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PTR, 1964 no. 2293.

³² Refer to chart 3

³³ "In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful." *Bismillah Irrahma*

Nirraheem. بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ | is repeated at the beginning of every act by the Muslim who dedicates his life to Allah and whose hope is in His Mercy. It is the most important and repeated phrase spoken by the believer through his day.

³⁴ This angular *Nastaliq* style was representative of Baysunghur's *kitabkhana* at Herat around mid-fifteenth century. This similar style of angular *Nastaliq* is also found in *Masnavi-i Masnavi*, Poet, Jalal al-Din Rumi, Herat, ca.1450. St. Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PTR, # 3719; and it is also speculated that it was written by a scribe from the *kitabkhana* of Ja'far al-

Tabrizi al-Bausunghuri in Herat, around the mid-fifteenth century. For certainty there is one *Shahnama* (*Shahnama*, copied for Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh, Herat, 1430. copied by Jafar al-Tabrizi al-Baysunghuri. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 21 Illustrations, Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 61) copied by Jafar al-Tabrizi al-Baysunghuri that also has same characteristic of angular *Nastaliq* style, which supports the hypothesis that other two manuscripts (*Shahnama* at St. Petersburg Cat. # 2293, and *Masnavi-i Masnavi*) may have been copied by Jafar al-Baysunghuri or one of his pupil at Baysunghur's *kitabkhana* of Ja'far al-Tabrizi al-Bausunghuri in Herat.

Yuri Petrosyan et al., 57-58.

³⁵ Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, 159-169; Petrosyan et al., with essay by Swietochowski, *Pages of Perfection: Islamic Paintings and Calligraphy from the Russian Academy of Sciences*, St. Petersburg, 186, 190-91.

³⁶ *Khamisa* of Nizami, Herat, 1494-95. London, British Library, MS Or. 6810.

³⁷ *Khamisa* of Nizami, Shah Rukh ibn Timur, Herat, 1431. copied by Muhammad Taqi, 502 Fol. with 38 illustrations. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. St. Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum, Cat. 38, VR-1000.

³⁸ Gray, *Persian Painting*, 88.

³⁹ *Khamisa* of Nizami, Herat, 1431. St. Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum, Cat. 38, VR-1000.

⁴⁰ This style of marginalia decoration that included figures of angles and animals was popular in Flemish and Burgundian Manuscripts of *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant*, London, The British Museum, Royal Library, MS 17, F I, Fol. 14; *Historie de Jason*, Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS 331, Fol. 139v.

⁴¹ Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, 338;

Basil Gray ed. *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia: 14th-16th Centuries* (Boulder: Shambala, 1979), 150, Basil Gray, *Oriental Islamic art: Collection of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation* (Lisbon: Museu Nacional de Antiga, 1963), 121; Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403-1406*, trans. Guy Le Strange (New York: Harper, 1928), 205-300.

⁴² Gray, *Persian Painting*, 52-53 from D. S. Rice, "The Seasons and the Labors of the Months in the Islamic Art" *Art Orientalis* Vol 1, 1954.

⁴³ Ming Dynasty rulers desired horses from central Asia, and the Timurids coveted porcelains and embroidered silks from China.

Gray, *Persian Painting*, 101.

⁴⁴ The frontispiece of the *Shahnama* and the *Khamisa* discussed earlier and they are the perfect example of this phenomenon. In addition various medallions with arabesque (derived from the synthesis of both the Chinese and Iranian motifs) will be discussed in this chapter. Sheila Canby, *Persian Painting* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 62-66.

⁴⁵ He was a diplomat as well as an artist and did many drawings and sketches himself while he was in China, though none of his artwork exists today. His stories have been recorded by Abdul Razzaq in his *History*.

⁴⁶ Gray, *Persian Painting*, 92, 104.

⁴⁷ Jessica Rawson, *Chinese Ornament: The Lotus and the Dragon* (London: The British Museum, 1984), 122-24.

Lisa Golombek, *Tamerlane's Tableware: A New Approach to Chinoiserie Ceramics of Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century Iran* (Toronto: Mazda Publishers in association with Royal Ontario Museum, 1996), n.pag.

⁴⁸ *Lobed Medallion with Animal Combat*, and *Medallion with Peacock*. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.71, #3 & #8.

- ⁴⁹ *Cloud Collarpoint with Kufic Medallion*. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.67, #2.
- ⁵⁰ Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.71, #3.
- ⁵¹ Barbara Brend, *Islamic Art* 132.
- ⁵² *The Simurg* is depicted on Abbasid and Seljuk metalwork, ceramics and fritware; and on Mongol and Timurid fritware and manuscripts.
From the third to the seventh centuries the Sassanians controlled a vast area spreading from the Euphrates across Iraq and Iran into central Asia into Afghanistan.
- ⁵³ Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.71, #8.
- ⁵⁴ The Mughals were the greatest and richest dynasty to rule Indian subcontinent. Their rule lasted over three hundred years (1526-1858). They were the great patrons of art and built the most beautiful monuments, gardens and commissioned luxurious manuscripts. Their cultural legacy is still alive today in India. The Mughals utilized the image of peacock in ornamental decorations, and the famous Peacock Throne made especially for Shah Jahan represented pure unadulterated beauty.
- ⁵⁵ *Cloud Collarpoint with Fantastic Plant*. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.67, #3.
- ⁵⁶ Blending of other styles such as Chinese, Indian, European, etc. into their own decorative program. In this particular instance, blending of Chinese styles.
- ⁵⁷ Design for margin. ca. first quarter fifteenth century. Ink on paper. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.51, # 1.
- ⁵⁸ Sassanians used this type of combating animal motif in their decorative themes and it was carved in the *ivan* of Taq-I Bستان. Iranians derive their heritage from Sassanian art and culture.
- ⁵⁹ Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.67, #3; Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayı Library, album, H. 2125.
- ⁶⁰ Design for Margin. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez Album, f. 73.S.51, #1 and *Khamsa*, St. Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000, Fol. 143 b.
- ⁶¹ David Tlabot Rice, *Islamic Art* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 214-18.
- ⁶² *Ducks*. Shiraz, 7.5 x 15.5 cm. Ink and gold on paper, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.43, #6; and *Floral and Vegetal Fragment with Birds*. 11.5 x 10 cm. Opaque watercolor and ink on paper, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S.77, #2.
- ⁶³ Lentz and Lowry, 118, 127-28; Drawing from *Horoscope of Iskandar Sultan ibn Umar-Shaykh*. Shiraz, 1411. 26.5 x 16.7 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, London, Welcome Institute Library, MS Persian 474.
- ⁶⁴ *Khamsa*, St. Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000.
- ⁶⁵ *Khamsa*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MS 9. Fol. 245 a & b; *Shahnama*, St Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PTR, 1964 no. 2293. Fol. 9v-10r.
- ⁶⁶ *Khamsa*, St. Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000. Fol. 143 b.
- ⁶⁷ *Death of King Dara*. *Shahnama*, Tabriz, Copied by Muhammad al-Haravi, Ink, color, and gold on paper. St Petersburg, Russia, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PTR, 1964 no. 2299. Fol. 370v.

⁶⁸ *Iskandar Weds the Daughter of Darius III. Khamsa* of Nizami, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MS 9. Fol. 209 b; *Alexander in Combat with the King of the Zangis. Khamsa* of Nizami, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, MS 9. Fol. 235 b.

⁶⁹ See chapter III, section A.

⁷⁰ *Iskandar Visiting the Hermit. Khamsa* of Nizami, Or. 6810. f. 273 a.; *Battle with Zanga. Shahnama*, for Sultan-Ali Mirza Gilan, 1493-94. copied by Salik ibn Said, most leaves are dispersed. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, Washington D.C., The Smithsonian Institute, S86.0176.

⁷¹ *Iskandar Begegnet dem Kaiser von China. and Chusrau erblickt Schirin Bein Bade. Shahnama*, For Prince Baysunghur 1420. copied by Amir Chusrau Dihlawi, Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Hs. S. 916; Vilkmair Enderlein, *Die Miniaturen der Berliner Baysunghur-Handschrift* (Berlin: Bilderhefte der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, 1991).

⁷² Gray suggests that this concept was realized from the Chinese hand-scroll paintings. Gray, *Persian Painting*, 22-24.

⁷³ *Shahnama*, St. Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PTR, 1964 no. 2293. Fol. 149.

⁷⁴ Design for Margin. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Orientabteilung, Diez album, f. 73.S51, #1; and *Khamsa*, St. Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000. Fol. 143 b.

⁷⁵ Most Persian non-liturgical manuscripts, especially both *Shahnama* and *Khamsa* of Nizami, are written in Farsi.

⁷⁶ In the Islamic world all liturgical books (Qur'an, and other prayer books) are written in Arabic. The grammatical structure of the Persian language (Farsi) is slightly different from Arabic, as the Persian words generally end with a rounded Arabic letter. *Nastaliq* script is designed with letters slightly slanted to accommodate the curve of the ending letter.

⁷⁷ Annmarie Schimmel, *Calligraphy and Islamic Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 1990), 22.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

These six basic styles are: *Naskh*, *Muhaqqaq*, *Thuluth*, *Tuqa*, *Riqa*, and *Rihani*. These styles were developed by the disciples of Yaqut al-Musta simi (d. 1298) at the end of the 13th century and the beginning of the fourteenth century. Together these *sitta* styles provided calligraphers with a basic repertoire of new scripts, which then were used for different purposes.

⁷⁹ Ibn Muqla was an Abbasid official in the early tenth century. He is considered to be the primary founder of the art of calligraphy. He devised the system of measuring the proportions of letters based on the number of dots in *alif*, the first letter of the Arabic alphabet. Then he established the rules for the exact proportions of the rest of the alphabet, which are based on the proportion of the first letter *alif*.

Yasin Hamid Safidi, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Boulder: Shambhala, 1979), 27.

⁸⁰ Basil Gray, *The Art of the Book in Central Asia* (Boulder: Shambhala Publication/UNESCO, 1979), 12-24.

⁸¹ *Calligraphic Exercise by Baysunghur*, Herat, ca. 1420-30. Ink on paper. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H. 2152. Fol. 31 b.

⁸² Master calligrapher Yaqut al-Musta simi and six of his pupils developed the cursive scripts known as *aqlam as-sitta*, which Baysunghur admired and wrote skillfully.

⁸³ Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, *Islamic arts and Ideas* (London: Phaidon Press, 1997), 214.

⁸⁴ Thomas Lentz, *Painting at Herat under Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1985), 475-80.

⁸⁵ Written in Herat, 1427-28. Ink on paper. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H. 2153. Fol. 98 a.

⁸⁶ Wheeler Thackston, *A Century of Princes: Sources in Timurid History and Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1987), n.pag.

⁸⁷ Lentz and Lowry, 364.

⁸⁸ Beautiful writing has two meanings. (1) Content: writings in the form of poems, and philosophical essays and (2) Calligraphy: beautiful handwriting.

CHAPTER 4

Section A

BURGUNDIAN MANUSCRIPTS OF ALEXANDER Illuminations

The illuminations of the Getty manuscript are beautifully executed, articulated with skilled workmanship and have theatrically staged narratives. These illustrations contain realistically illustrated figural drawings, rich jeweled toned colors, and carefully constructed compositions. The illuminations of the Getty manuscript are of exceptional quality compared to the twenty-eight other illustrated manuscripts of Curtius's and Vasco's text, which are executed with less panache, poorer workmanship, possibly by mediocre artists.¹ According to McKendrick, "... the Getty manuscripts are a good example of the large lectern volumes of non-liturgical text that were being produced by the best contemporary professional book makers in the Burgundian Netherlands in the fifteenth century."²

The Getty manuscript contains a total of fourteen illuminations, out of which eleven are large, richly executed illustrations and three are small, just as richly executed and well articulated. The first large illumination [Pl. 1] the presentation scene, *Vasco presenting the volume to Charles the Bold*, marks the beginning of the manuscript, denotes Vasco's prologue. The other nine illuminations are placed at the beginning of each of the nine books that contain Vasco's entire text [Pls. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 14]. The four remaining illuminations are placed at the opening of two chapters in book 5 [Pls. 7, 8] and two in book 6 [Pls. 10, 11]. Three illuminations [Pls. 8, 10, 11] are small, occupying the width of only one text column instead of the

standard two. Only one large illustration entitled, *Bagoas Pleads on Behalf of Nabarzanes; Thalestris and Amazons Visit Alexander* [Pl. 7] is not placed at the beginning of the book but McKendrick suggests the episode [Pl. 7] is important enough to the overall theme of the manuscript, therefore, it is placed at the beginning of a chapter in book 5.³

BURGUNDIAN STYLE

Burgundian artists in Bruges and Ghent began to assert their own individual styles, and the artist's desire to study nature had a direct influence on the character of the illumination. The emphasis was on the realistic school of painting and perfect mastery of techniques.⁴ Most outdoor scenery has a soft wash of deep blue vanishing towards the horizon in the background with realistically drawn natural landscape in the middle and foreground.⁵ The artists begin articulating the characters in a greatly individualized repertoire of settings, varied interiors, increased range of townscapes, and realistically drawn landscapes.⁶ Almost all the allegorical formulae used in earlier manuscript illuminations are replaced by realism, both in figural drawings as well as in landscape representation.⁷ Artists do not abandon the depiction of symbolism in pictorial composition. Symbolism is a very effective tool to give importance to the image of Alexander, it makes him larger than life, and it is an implicit way to raise his status to that of other great heroes of the world.

In the process of creating a new non-liturgical imagery, Burgundian artists begin to incorporate their own direct visual observations of the surroundings and familiar objects.⁸ The interiors include tiled floors, colored

marble pillars, luxurious silk hangings in vibrant colors, red velvet canopies with green fringe, and an assortment of rich wooden furniture such as tall cupboards, thrones, and banquet tables. The exterior scenes include cityscapes, with contemporary architecture, peaked rooflines with pointed turrets, parapets, tents, outcroppings of rocks, green bushy trees, and in the far background mountains and a sky tinted with a pale blue wash. The illustration of authentic contemporary costumes, along with fifteenth century architecture, and the depiction of daily life represent factual visual records that could be adapted as contemporary reference books such as the *Encyclopedia*.⁹

THE GETTY MANUSCRIPT: DECORATIONS

The artist of the Getty manuscript created illuminations as imaginary windows on whose surface plane dramatic narratives are represented through linear perspective. Each human character is realistically portrayed with careful modeling, painted with extensive gesture, given dramatic posture, eloquent facial expression, making him or her come alive (real) on the two-dimensional surface. The late fifteenth-century contemporary costumes with fancy headdresses are the artists' means by which they differentiate their contemporary world from the world of Alexander. Each human figure represents his or her unique individual personality, and exudes passion in the dramatic theatrical stage created by the artist. These illuminations are of great value for the study of furniture, vessels, and ensemble of the second half of the fifteenth century.¹⁰

Except for the presentation scene, Alexander is the main subject for the rest of the miniatures, even when he is not present on the theatrical stage. He is realistically portrayed as a vibrant, young man, (not many contemporary illuminators were observant or mindful to portray Alexander as a young conqueror) distinguished by his royal crown, or draped in a luxurious gold robe [Pls. 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 14]. His presence is further dramatized by the inscriptions bearing his name and the title *Alexandre Roy* which is displayed above his tent, [Pls. 3, 9] over the castle gateway in Sittacene in Plate 5, and his shortened initials “AR” are inscribed on the red canopy as well as on the jerkins of his followers [Pls. 5, 6, 8]. He is also identified by the crown on his head, and sometimes by a heraldic emblem of his arms representing a rampart red lion holding a halberd, regularly found in manuscript illumination from the fifteenth century on.¹¹

The artist of the Getty manuscript was mindful of Curtius’s perception of the multifaceted character attributions of Alexander who exhibited extravagant manners and egocentric self-importance. One of Curtius’s thematic concerns is whether Alexander will prove worthy of his *fortuna*. Many times he questions Alexander’s judgement as a just ruler, and writes about his moral decline. He also praises Alexander’s courageous deeds, astute military judgement, and compassion towards Darius’s family.¹²

The Getty artist clothes Alexander in brilliant costumes to give him center stage and depicts him with grand gestures, making him the central subject of all the miniatures. Curtius clearly highlighted Alexander’s greatness yet he questioned Alexander’s persona as a ruler and a military

commander. He has portrayed Alexander as a questionable judge [Pls. 8, 9, 10, 14]. The writer sheds doubts about Alexander's exercise of great power and strength, it is accompanied with proper justification, self-restrained, and compassion [Pl. 5, 6, 8,] or if it is a product of anger, sexual passion or too much imbibing [Pls. 9, 10, 12, 14].

THE GETTY ILLUMINATIONS: ASSESSING THE DATE OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS

In spite of the fact that the Getty manuscript is not dated, McKendrick is confident in his assessment of when the manuscript was scribed¹³ and illuminated. The artist of the Getty's manuscript was a keen observant of the realistic contemporary costumes that helped McKendrick and his colleagues to further refine the dates of the illustrations.¹⁴ Certain characteristics of the costumes depicting the fashion of the time, which other contemporary artists also have used in various manuscripts¹⁵ around the same time, narrows the gap of the Getty illustrations to a date between 1468 and 1474. The men's fashion included expensive clothing that are brilliantly highlighted in gold, short gowns revealing the shapely buttocks or long gowns that draped to their ankles, tapered to accentuate the narrow waistline. Many wear a jeweled pendant, pointed shoes, and coats with bulky sleeves, extending beyond the wrist or folded back to reveal their hands. Shaggy beaver hats or tall felt bonnets repose jauntily on their heads. Their long hair covers their necks and ears yet reveals the tip of their earlobes.

For women, steeple headdresses or large silk turbans with a jewel at the center are an important fashion statement along with long expensive

gowns that emphasize their narrow waists, and long sleeves turned back at the wrist and highlighted in gold. The scooped necklines, titillating but not revealing, enhance the dramatic effects of the costumes. The soldiers wear identical armor. Alexander is portrayed in identical costumes in Plates 6, 7, 12, 14, and these typical fashions for men and women were popular during the late 1460s and early 1470s McKendrick thus states, “very little time elapsed between the transcription and decoration of the present manuscript.”¹⁶

FROM LEGEND TO HISTORY

The Getty manuscript offered a new learning, a transition from the *fabula* (Alexander’s Romance) to *historia* (true history) which signaled a new beginning in the development of contemporary Western European culture. This evolution shaped the medieval person’s future and gave birth to the New World in which we now reside. The seeds of new learning of the Renaissance sprouted from this transition.¹⁷

Vasco presented a perspective of non-Christian ideology and a view of history where the workings of Divine Manifestation were clearly absent.¹⁸ Thus this transition challenged artists to develop a new iconographic repertoire, abandoning the picture cycles that previously illustrated Alexander’s Romances.¹⁹ Those responsible for the Getty manuscripts clearly responded to the new phenomenon and created new iconography paying careful attention to Vasco’s colorful text.²⁰

ARTISTIC CHARACTERISTIC

The Getty illuminations have an expressive articulation of narrative, through carefully constructed compositions. The townscapes reveal the enchanting life of the street, lovingly detailed interiors, and majestic landscapes mimic real life. Half a dozen soldiers may imply an army or a few houses may represent a city, but what stands out the most is the intense realism in the depiction of either outdoor or indoor composition.²¹

These illustrations are bereft of any religious content, which was an important factor in the development of the new imagery for artists.²² To facilitate the rapid production of books,²³ artists began to develop certain formulae that were easily repeated and incorporated in the illustration cycles of the manuscripts.²⁴ In many instances a repetition of figural groupings, some elements of architecture, and overall composition arrangements is evident in the Getty's illustrations indicating that the artist has relied on some of these formulae [Pls. 1, 3, 7, 9, 12]. The fifteenth-century Netherlandish artists and especially the Flemish artist's primary impetus came from Flemish Oab`nel paintings, with its wide range of pictorial invention, and the introduction of illusionistic space into manuscript illustration.²⁵

When the Netherlandish School of panel painting was established in the fifteenth century, a close relationship between illuminators and monumental painters grew, and the illuminators began to exhibit the influence of monumental painting in their illustrations.²⁶ They adapted a spatial and illusionistic conception of panel paintings to the illuminated

pages. A major shift in the style of decorations encouraged the artist to give emphasis on the visual experience, creating illusionistic surfaces framed by the architecture and transforming the two-dimensional surface to a three-dimensional experience.

For Netherlandish artists narration of the scene took precedent over the depiction of three-dimensional space or the mirroring of nature. Sometimes spatial relationships are skewed to emphasize certain aspects of a story, and sometimes foreground, middle ground, and background do not create a cohesive space.²⁷ The Getty artist sometimes employs architecture in a unique way to isolate a large area on the left-hand side for the main scene [Pls. 2, 7, 12, 14]. In some of the Getty illustrations more than one narrative is depicted and to accommodate multiple stories within one picture frame, multiple picture boxes are created with the help of architecture [Pls. 2, 3, 5, 7, 12]. This does create the distortion of space, but beautifully and convincingly drawn individual scenes within each picture box, heighten the drama and lessen the effect of distortion.²⁸

An effective use of line accompanied by a vibrant palette draws attention to the main person or action [Pls. 4, 13]. For example, in the complex battle scene at Tyre [Pl. 4] among the cadre of soldiers fighting the enemy, attention is drawn to Alexander because of a vertical mast of the ship leading our vision towards his head, as he stands with his hand raised above his head, clad in gold armor suit with crown on his head in front of the ship's mast. The same technique is applied to another complicated battle scene in the town of Sudraceae [Pl. 13]. Among the many soldiers and dead bodies, our

attention is immediately drawn to Alexander because of his vibrant gold armor suit with a vertical trunk of a tree anchoring his figure in front. These devices not only help the viewer to focus on the central figure, but the spatial arrangements help the viewer penetrate the scene through personal involvement in the events depicted, revealed through their eye contact and body language.

The artist has rendered stereotypical beautifully graceful female forms of that era. Darius's mother and her attendants [Pl. 5], the niece of Artaxerxes [Pl. 6], Bagoas [Pls. 7,14], and amazons [Pl.7] look regal and elegant. Large spherical turbans and conical headdresses rest on their heads with their delicate faces with pointed chins expressing the full range of emotions, and heightening drama of the narrative. Elegantly long and richly colorful dresses hug their bodies though which one can observe fully rounded breasts, and tiny waists. In the Plate 2 *The Birth of Alexander* the artist captures the action just before Olympias is about put baby Alexander in the outstretched hands of her attendants; all the figures in this scene are not static but full of dramatic gestures and ready to receive baby Alexander in their arms.

Male forms, although youthful in facial features, are drawn anatomically correct. This is more evident in the nude form of Alexander [Pl. 3] emerging from the Cydnus River. In other miniatures Alexander looks regal, refine, and courtly. All male and female forms are drawn from all different angles with a wide variety of poses and gestures, with their legs slightly bent to suggest the shift of weight from their bodies and an

occasional raised heel to suggest motion. They lie wounded or dead in contorted pose [Pls. 9, 13], in actions with raised hands or flipping and tumbling as acrobats [Pl. 5], or falling from a wall or a ship with their hands splayed downwards and knees bent [Pl. 4, 13], or in combat with raised swords and lances [Pls. 4, 13], giving each human figure its own unique persona.

A magnificent drama is played out in the scene—the execution of Philotas [Pl. 9]. The executioner is holding a lance frozen in time just about to strike Philotas; and another accomplice has just moments ago been beheaded while Alexander watches this drama unfold. Another example of capturing just the right moment [Pl. 5] is when Alexander's fingertips are just about to touch the arms of Darius's mother as he seeks to console and placate the irate mother. The artist has captured the emotions and the drama and most importantly the essence of each story and presented it to the spectators not just to view it but to experience it as well.

ILLUMINATOR OF THE GETTY MANUSCRIPT

Each miniature is rendered with the same rich palette, has many common compositional groupings of figures, and has a similar organizational formulae used both for indoor as well as outdoor settings. Thus at a glance, it gives a total unified appearance which supports the theory that the manuscript was illustrated by one single illuminator. Yet after close observation of the difference in the quality, and fluctuation in the level of accomplishments within the illustration program of the Getty manuscript, McKendrick suggests that several artists may have worked under the

supervision of one very accomplished master illustrator, further suggesting that it may have been produced in the master illustrator's workshop or atelier with a principal artist working with his apprentices.²⁹

In the fifteenth century some manuscripts were produced with several artists working under one master illuminator in his atelier, therefore sometimes it is problematic to ascertain who actually did the illustration and which artist should be given credit for the work.³⁰ Since the artist of the Getty manuscript is not known, it is hypothesized that the artist was from Bruges, because illustrations bear many similarities to the illustration of Van Latham³¹ and also some, to the Master of Margaret of York.³² The presence of Van Latham in Bruges in 1468 was important for the development of illumination in that city and also presupposes the influence of the artist in the Getty illustration cycle.³³

ILLUMINATIONS: GETTY PLATES³⁴

[Plate 1]

***Vasco Da Lucena Presents His Translation to Charles the Bold* (Fol. 2v)**

For the non-liturgical manuscripts, contemporary vernacular literature and translations, the presentation scene was the most popular opening illustration.³⁵ The Netherlandish artists formulated a certain aesthetic formula that grouped Burgundian dukes with their courtiers and could be used regardless of the identity of the attendants or the authors.³⁶ The Getty artist created an elegant scene with Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy

seated at the throne surrounded by the fashionably dressed members of the Burgundian court and Vasco kneeling in front presenting his manuscript of his translation of *The History of Alexander the Great* by Quintus Curtius Rufus.

The Getty artist has employed the technique of creating picture boxes within the illustration hence the illustration has one cohesive appearance yet each picture box illustrates separate story or different an idea. The Getty artist created three picture boxes: the main central image, the presentation scene takes up most of the space with two small picture windows, one outdoor scene with a man and a dog providing a contrast from the two interior scenes. The second picture box shows a room adjoining the main presentation salon extending our vision beyond the main point of convergence where a stately canopied bed is in main focus. The artist has employed a disingenuous device linking the canopied bed to the following illustration, *The Birth of Alexander*. McKendrick alludes to the stately bed in the same picture-plane with the Burgundian Duke as a symbol by which the artist has attempted to link Charles the Bold with Alexander the Great.³⁷

[Plate 2]
***The Birth of Alexander* (Fol. 15r)**

This illumination is very complex, full of symbolism, and has many layers of hidden messages. The focal point of the illumination is the grand canopy bed. Olympias (mother of Alexander and wife of Philip of Macedon) is in the process of presenting the newborn baby Alexander to the outstretched

hands of her ladies-in-waiting who are eagerly awaiting this event. The prominent theme of the illustration is the commemoration of Alexander's birth in 356 B.C.E. and the awaiting celebrations of future greatness. The foreground with the canopy bed, and the ladies in waiting are executed with lots of care, whereas not much care is lavished on the background. This difference in the illustrative technique may support McKendrick's theory that it was a collaborated effort of a few artists—a master artist may have worked on the principal scene while his apprentices may have worked on the other parts of the illumination.

A cluster of ladies surrounds the grand bed dressed in the contemporary fifteenth-century costumes.³⁸ A small dragon hovers above the mother and son, and two eagles are perched outside on the roof. Vasco wrote about the two eagles that rested on the roof of Philip's palace from morning till night, during the time of Alexander's birth. It is said that the two eagles predicted the two empires, one Asia and the other Europe, and Alexander as ruling both continents.

The dragon symbolizes the conception of Alexander, a theme upon which Vasco had written voluminously in his first book (1.3).³⁹ King Philip, the father of Alexander saw a vision, in it, a dragon was sleeping beside his wife, Olympias. The oracle at Delphi declared that Zeus was disguised as a dragon.⁴⁰ The identity of Alexander's real father has been a topic for many. The sibyl at Erythrae and oracle at Didyma hailed Alexander as "son of Zeus," the chief of all Olympian gods. Egyptian priests acknowledged Alexander as the "Son of Ra," the Egyptian sun god and later as the "Son of

Ammon," Alexander as son of God and bestowing him with the divine origins.⁴¹

The Getty artist created two picture boxes that are separated by the pilaster adorned with the statues. He repeated the same technique in later illustrations [Pls. 12, 14]. In the second picture box in the background the temple of Diana at Ephesus, in Asia Minor is ablaze, foretelling the defeat of Asia and also Alexander avenging the defeat of Greece by the Persian emperor, Xerxes in 480 B.C.E.⁴² The temple of Diana at Ephesus burned down in the year 356 B.C.E., the year Alexander was born, but early writers have transposed the dates assigning both the events the same day, manipulating the historical fact.⁴³

In the middle ground young Alexander is shown to ride his horse, Bucephalus,⁴⁴ the horse that will accompany him in many future campaigns. The Getty's artist followed Vasco's stories faithfully except for the Alexander's house. He drew the horse with curled horns sprouting from his head, taking inspiration from the stories where curled horns were the well-known features of the horses in the Alexander Romance.⁴⁵ Earlier artists on many occasions were restrained from putting their own individual marks on the illumination due to the content of the text or the collaborative process (scribes, marginalia decorators or book dealers). But during the fifteenth century artists begin to decide on the nature of new images, and doing so begin to add more and more individualistic stamps of their own.⁴⁶

[Plate 3]
Alexander's Illness at the Cydnus River and the Death of
Sisinnes (Fol. 41r)

Alexander became seriously ill in the summer of 333 B.C.E. after conquering the Cilician City of Tarsus, causing widespread alarm among his army. Curtius (3.5.1-5) and Vasco in his second book (2.7-8) wrote a more colorful narration than some of their contemporaries.⁴⁷ Curtius suggested Alexander became ill after bathing in cool waters of the Cydnus River during the hot summer afternoon. Alexander became very pale and was overcome by sudden pain, caught a chill and began to shiver. He collapsed and was carried up to his tent by his attendants, unconscious and according to Curtius, on the point of death.

Plutarch (19.2) and Arrian (2.4.7) narrated a more credible and less colorful account, suggesting that Alexander became ill from exhaustion, after relentlessly marching across Asia Minor and willfully insisting on being at the front of his infantry units in every battle en-route. While Justin (11.18.1) narrated a more colorful account like Curtius, stating that when Alexander heard the report of Darius approaching with huge army, he was cured in three days.⁴⁸

The Getty artist skillfully created a theatrical set for staging several episodes, by compartmentalizing the field of illumination. The first story has two picture boxes, whereas the second story takes place in the middle ground in the third picture box. There are no physical barriers to separate each picture field. Therefore our eyes move without restraint from one episode to

the other, but each picture box has its own sets of characters and Alexander is illustrated twice to illustrate two consecutive incidents.⁴⁹

In the first picture field on the right, naked Alexander (very ill, looking gaunt and emaciated) is shown emerging from the Cydnus River. His nude figure is skillfully modeled and is anatomically correct. Great attention is given to surrounding details. The walled city on the far right background is almost certain to represent the Cilician City of Tarsus. One can speculate about the small figure on the bridge walking towards the walled city holding a flaming torch, he supposedly could be a Persian who attempted to burn down the city in order to prevent it from falling into enemy hands. According to Curtius (3.4.13-15) and Vasco (2.7), his attempt was foiled because of the unexpected arrival of Alexander and his men at the scene.

Still continuing with the first story in the second field on the left foreground, here Alexander is visible through the open flap of his tent, resting in his bed holding a bowl of medicine. Philip, his personal physician as well as childhood friend, stands next to his bed reading a letter from Permenion, one of Alexander's generals. In this letter Permenion warns Alexander against trusting his physician and friend, who he claims has been bribed by Darius, the great king of Persia. Written by Arrian, Justinus, Plutarch, and Curtius, Alexander drinks his medicine while he intently watches Philip's face searching for any sign of guilt thus demonstrating his courage and good judgement in trusting his friend and drinking the medicine.

In the second story in the center middle ground, one of Alexander's men is executing the Persian Sisinnus, whose loyalty towards Alexander is

questioned. Unlike his physician and friend Philip whose loyalty Alexander trusted, he did not trust the loyalty of Sisinnes and judged him guilty of treason and ordered his execution. Sisinnes is placed among beautiful green scenery, with outcroppings of rocks and trees. The tents with pointed roofs mark the foreground; the walled cityscape in the near background with pale blue hills and the sky in the horizon delineates the background. The artist has achieved great depth in the illustration by arranging hills, rocks, and buildings behind one another. He has also used a similar compositional formula in plate 9.

[Plate 4]
Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre (Fol. 61r)

Before Alexander began to attack the great Phoenician city of Tyre, the island fortress was considered unassailable. Alexander assaulted the city from January 332 B.C.E. until it was successfully defeated six months later in July. According to Curtius (4.4.17) and Diodorus (17.46.4), it was a fierce and bloody battle where Alexander ordered the crucifixion of two thousand defeated citizens of Tyre.⁵⁰

The illustration depicts the battle being waged at the harbor of Tyre, with the massive boats of Alexander attacking the city. The boats look very similar to the fourteenth and fifteenth century Hanse cock-boats⁵¹ that were used for journeys between Baltic Sea to the North Sea as well as the warships,⁵² another example of the Getty artist illustrating contemporary Burgundian artifacts and not those from the time of Alexander. The illustration is beautifully staged with fierce battle scenes: Alexander is shown

dressed in his royal of gold armor-suit, anchored against the vertical mast of the principal ship. The main objective for this miniature is to show Alexander as a fearless military commander.

[Plate5]

The competition in Sittacene and the Placating of Sisigambis
(Fol. 99r)

This is the second illumination where two stories are presented. But portrayal of this narration is very different from any other illustration with two stories. Based on the text of Curtius (5.2.2-5), it appears that the author had called for two separate scenes, one depicting the competition in Sittacene and other Alexander placating Sisigambis. The Getty's artist seems to have merged both settings onto one so much so that Alexander is depicted only once and both the spectators as well as main characters of both the stories move freely without the barriers of architecture⁵³ from one scene to the other. At a glance it looks like the illustration contains only one story. Unless one is aware of the artist's intention to merge both the stories, it is difficult to discern that there are two separate and distinctive stories in this illumination.

To boost the morale of the soldiers during the winter of 331-330 B.C.E. Alexander decided to have a competition while marching from Babylon to Susa. The biggest motivating factor for the soldiers was the grand prize; the winner was to be awarded the command of a unit of one thousand men.

For Alexander, the principal reason for the competition was to test the agility and the military valor of his soldiers and to reorganize his battalions after the battle of Gaugamela. He wanted to create eight infantry units of

one thousand men who would be capable of confronting mobile battalions of the Persian army further and beyond.

To the left as well as in the foreground men are engaged in different athletic activities while others seem to watch the spectacle. One soldier seems to hurl a large stone, one throws an iron bar or a javelin, while another soldier is performing some gymnastic maneuvers. All the soldiers are dressed in colorful short jerkins pinched at the waist with the initials "AR" (Alexander Roy) and tight fitting pants to show off their athletic figures. Alexander is standing in the foreground, dressed regally watching the activities on his right, adjacent to the group of four women on his left.

In Curtius's writing no mention has been made of women being present at the games, but McKendrick suggests it is the concurrent episode at Susa where Alexander had personally placated Sisigambis, the captive mother of the great king Darius of the Persian Empire.⁵⁴ The retinue of four women, with Sisigambis standing in front, with two ladies supporting the long train of her dress, is being placated by Alexander, after having unwittingly injured her pride by Alexander suggesting that her daughters, like his (Alexander's) sisters, might make their own clothes (Curtius 5.2.16-22) and Vasco 4.5).⁵⁵ The same grouping with ladies supporting a long train on the dress of her queen is repeated in *Thalestris and the Amazons Visit Alexander* [Pl. 7].⁵⁶

It is a well-known fact that Alexander had treated Darius's family with fairness, with dignity, and grace after the Persian king was defeated at Issus in 333 B.C.E.⁵⁷ This particular event is the subject of all the major literary

sources and is also depicted in the painting by Veronese in the National Gallery in London.⁵⁸ Once again Curtius has portrayed Alexander in a positive light, a kind and magnanimous king, as well as an intelligent and a shrewd military commander.

[Plate 6]
Alexander and the Niece of Artaxerxes III (Fol.123r)

Alexander's acts of generosity and kindness towards the niece of Ochus, king of Persia (also known as Artaxerxes III, who ruled from 359 to 338 B.C.E.) portrays him in a favorable light in this illumination. Alexander had earlier observed this woman among Persian captives and had discovered her lineage. The scene illustrated here is what happened next in the episode. Alexander seated at banqueting table orders one of his attendants to hand a chest to the woman who is kneeling in front of him. Alexander honored the captured niece of the Persian king and set her free, returning all her belongings and also ordering a search for her husband (Curtius 6.2.8-9 and Vasco 5.5). Alexander is known to have freed many other noble Persian captives after his victory over Darius and after Darius's subsequent death in 330 B.C.E. The banquet scene is one of many where Alexander seems to have indulged in a heavy bout of drinking, but this episode reveals all the good and noble qualities of the ruler, just as in the previous miniature [Pl. 5].

[Plate 7]
***Bagoas Pleads on Behalf of Nabarzanes;
Thalestris and Amazons Visit Alexander (Fol. 133v)***

This illumination once again contains two consecutive episodes (Curtius 6.5.22-32 and Vasco 5.13). This is the only large two-column

illustration, which is not placed in the beginning of a book, suggesting that it still had particular importance within the overall program of illuminations. In the first episode Bagoas, a handsome eunuch and Alexander's favorite companion (in Vasco's text has been metamorphosized into a young and attractive woman "to avoid a bad example"),⁵⁹ center stage, looking regal, pleads on behalf of Nabarzanes to set him free. Nabarzanes was one of the plotters against Darius who had first fled to Hyrcania and then later surrendered to Alexander.

In this episode Vasco questions Alexander's judgement in pardoning Nabarzanes. In Vasco's opinion Alexander was influenced by a corrupting sexual force whose power was strong enough to pardon a guilty man and bring about the death of an innocent man (Orsines who was the governor of Parsagadae in Persia [Plate 14]).

The story in the second episode is more exotic. It is said that the fame and bravery of Alexander was widespread even during his lifetime, and it had spread to the furthest corner of the world, where the Amazons lived. Upon hearing about Alexander's greatness, Queen Thalestris and her Amazon companions visited Alexander and without any hesitation requested that she (Thalestris) had come this far to have children by the king. According to Vasco's narration (6.5.30-32), after thirteen passion-filled days the Queen returned to her land. Here again Vasco presents to the reader Alexander's questionable sexual behavior, and afterward he still continues to deal with the same theme and questions his judgement again in Plate 14, *The Execution of Orsines*.

The artist has illustrated both the episodes very cleverly. The drama of the first episode is staged with Bagoas in the center of the grand room bowing regally in front of Alexander who is sitting on the throne, surrounded by his courtiers, pleading on behalf of Nabarzanes. Nabarzanes also is kneeling in front of Alexander with his hands together beseeching silently to Alexander to pardon him. Bagoas is garbed in the latest contemporary fashion of that period with a steeple headdress, a rich green emerald gown, tapered to showoff her narrow waist and scooped neckline to display the hint of her seductive breast. The first episode occupies more than two-thirds of the picture space, with an indoor setting. The second picture box is an outdoor scene which comprises Queen Thalestris and her Amazon companions looking as if they just arrived at the scene and waiting for the drama to conclude before they step inside to get an audience with Alexander. The whole composition is skillfully constructed so as the second picture box, which contains the story of the Amazons looks either, like a large wall painting of Amazons, or a view through a glass door or a window where the Amazons awaiting outside can observe the first episode.

[Plate 8]

***Alexander Orders the Destruction of His Army's Excess Baggage*
(Fol.135v)**

This is one of the three small one-column width illuminations at the beginning of the chapter in Book 5. As narrated by Curtius (6.6.14-17) Alexander was forced to reduce the volume of spoils from various military victories that he and his soldiers had collected by 330 B.C.E. They were preparing to track down the murderers of Darius; Bessus, (one of the two

murderers) had fled to Bactria. This is one of the instances where Alexander has applied his good judgement as an astute military commander to lessen the load as they march ahead. As narrated by Vasco (5.16), Alexander first asks his baggage to be brought out, torched and burned, followed by his soldiers, keeping only the most essential of items.

Here Alexander is surrounded by his men, who are carrying various baggage and paraphernalia to be destroyed. The scene unfolds with Alexander standing in front of an open pit fire where various trunks and other luggage is being burnt and one of the men is just at the point of throwing some more baggage in the fire. Alexander is easily distinguishable from the rest of his men as he stands slightly taller than his men, wearing a crown, and garbed in a jewel-toned (colored) costume.

[Plate 9]

The execution of Philotas (Fol.149r)

In October 330 B.C.E. Alexander uncovered another plot against himself. This time his senior cavalry commander, Philotas, son of Permenion, aroused his suspicions,⁶⁰ as he had not reported an alleged conspiracy plot to Alexander. He was arrested and, after an indictment, put to death. In Curtius's narration (6.11.38) Philotas was executed by stoning; and according to Arrian (3.26.3) he was stabbed with javelins by Alexander's troops. The artist in the Getty manuscript has painted this drama at the point where Philotas is just about to be beheaded by the soldier holding a sword, and another co-conspirator just seconds before has been beheaded, with blood gushing out of his neck and his severed head laying just a few feet

from his body. Alexander is standing in front of his rich ruby-toned tent with “Alexander Rex” written in gold at the top, watching this unfolding drama along with his troops. The huddled soldiers both on the left and right are skillfully rendered. The heraldic emblem supported by two combatant red lions,⁶¹ which was frequently used in the Burgundian times, is placed directly above the entrance of Alexander’s tent and is one of the means to directly link the Burgundian dukes with Alexander the Great.

The scene is staged with a beautiful blue sky and tall mountains in the horizon. The serene cityscape with tall pointed turrets, plus the body of water rippling down, surrounded by green trees in the background is in direct contrast to the drama being played out in the foreground. The conical shapes of the turrets are repeated once again in pointed tops of the colorful tents (ruby red, emerald green and royal blue) in the middle ground. The artist has beautifully juxtaposed various shapes and repeated them again to fuse the scene dramatically.

Alexander is thought to have had many plots against him.⁶² This alleged plot and the subsequent fate of the traitors became the subject of many heated debates by various historians.⁶³ In this dramatic illustration once again Vasco questions Alexander’s judgement as a fair military leader.

[Plate 10]
Death of Permenion (Fol.154r)

Plate 10 is another small illumination, at the beginning of the chapter in book 6. This is the only illustration (beside the presentation scene) where

Alexander is not physically present in the drama, though there is no mistaking that the creator of the drama is Alexander.

Alexander took swift action against Permenion, his second-in command military general, after hearing Philotas's confession⁶⁴ [Pl. 9] of an another plot to assassinate him. He sent Polydamas to Cleander with a written order on what to do with Permenion. Polydamas gave a letter to Permenion pretending that the letter was from one of his co-conspirators but in fact it was from Alexander. Polydamas observes Permenion's pleased reaction, he (Permenion) thinks that the letter was from his co-conspirator, thus seeing Permenion pleased reaction Polydamas stabbed Permenion first in the side then in the throat.

Alexander's precise role in Permenion's death is a matter of debate by most authors,⁶⁵ and Curtius himself does not offer any straightforward clarification. The Getty's artist follows the script and only depicts the event, as narrated by Curtius (7.2.13-32).

[Plate 11]

The Founding of Alexandria-in-Caucaso (fol.156v)

This is the last of the three small illuminations that mark the opening chapter in Book 6. Alexander founded a new city, Alexandria-in-Caucaso at the foot of the Hindu-Kush Mountains at or near Bergram (fifty miles north of Kabul) in northeast Kabul in January 329 B.C.E.⁶⁶ It was an important historical event and is narrated by Curtius (7.3.22-23), as well as his other contemporary historians Arrian (3.28.4), and Diodorus. He used this city as his main headquarters, and continued onwards over the Hindu-Kush range

into Bactria to fight against the Bessus rebels. Having successfully defeating the Bessus rebels, he then continued onwards to the Indus River towards the Indian sub-Continent.

The name Alexandria-in-Caucaso came from the mistaken belief of ancient writers who thought that the Hindu-Kush range (known in ancient time as *Paropamisadae*) was a part of this long Caucasus mountain range, which believed to stretch from Cilicia to India.

This is the only small, one-column width square illustration (the other two are rectangular) in the Getty's manuscript. It is a very lively scene with workers painted in different actions constructing various parts of the city walls along with Alexander supervising the construction of his new city with his two comrades.

[Plate 12]

Alexander Fights with a Lion and Kills Clitus (Fol. 175r)

This illumination also contains two sequential stories similar to the plate 7. The Getty's artist has painted what it looks to be one scene but has skillfully divided the illustration by adding a pillar to create two picture fields. The indoor scene on the left is where the second story takes place, is given more prominence and occupies more than two-thirds of the picture window whereas *Alexander Fights the Lion* is an outdoor scene contrasting the indoor drama taking up only a small portion of the picture field. Burgundian artists perfected the device of compartmentalizing the picture field to illustrate more than one episode in single illustration.⁶⁷

The story *Alexander Fights the Lion* illustrates Alexander's personal strength and bravery, whereas in the same plate in the next narration *Alexander kills Clitus* Alexander is portrayed in completely opposite light. In the story *Alexander Fights the Lion*, Alexander encounters a large lion while on a hunt in Basaira, near Marakanda (Samarqand) and kills the lion single-handedly without the help of any of his companions. Both Curtius (8.1.11-19) as well as Vasco (7.2) along with Diodorus narrated the story exhibiting Alexander's strength and valor.

The artist made a slight alteration depicting the incident; He portrayed Alexander using a spiked club instead of a hunting spear as narrated by Curtius. In this manner he has transposed the image of Alexander with Hercules fighting the Nemean Lion. Hercules is said to have been a descendent of Alexander who also reached India. According to McKendrick, this scene helps to explain how the lion came to be Alexander's fictive heraldic emblem.⁶⁸ The posture of the attacking lion is similar to the Burgundian heraldic emblem of the red lion and is used as one of the symbols to link Burgundian dukes to Alexander.

In the second story *Alexander kills Clitus*, once again Curtius (8.1.22-51) questions Alexander's actions and portrays him as a quick tempered, hard drinking, jealous, unforgiving, and unjust leader.⁶⁹ This violent action takes place in the banqueting hall where Alexander has just moments before thrust his lance into Clitus's chest with blood oozing out of his chest and the members of his courts watching this drama unfold in horror and amazement. The evidence of the scuffle is obvious with overturned table and broken

benches, scattered dishes and spilled wine in the room. Alexander is standing with one foot forward and the other leg bent at the knee suggesting firm posture and tremendous strength so as to thrust the lance into Clitus's chest. The artist has captured the horrific moment splendidly and made the scene come alive portraying expressive gestures, diverse actions, shocking facial expression, of the men present in the scene.

This unfortunate event occurred in the autumn of 328 B.C.E. at Marakanda (Samarqand) where Alexander and his companions were indulging in the heavy bout of drinking. In the state of inebriation, Alexander began to vocalize his own worthiness and belittled the achievements of his elders and especially of his father, Philip; claiming that he, and not his father was accountable for the famous victory at Chaeronea in 338 B.C.E. Many older members of the Macedonian guard, including Clitus who had served under King Philip, took umbrage to the remark stating, "The king gained glory only by the blood of others; the young owed everything to the older generation, including men such as Permenion (whom Alexander had already put to death [Pl.10])."⁷⁰

As more insults poured out from Clitus, Alexander became enraged and seized a lance to attack Clitus but was restrained by his companions. Alexander suspected Clitus of yet another plot against him, and waited in the darkness for Clitus; as Clitus began to leave the banqueting hall, Alexander thrust a lance⁷¹ into his side, so hard that Alexander was covered with Clitus's blood, declaring, "Now go and join Philip, Permenion and Attalus."⁷²

[Plate 13]

Alexander Fights in the Town of the Sudrae (Fol.204r)

This episode also portrays Alexander's extraordinary valor and strength although Curtius (9.5.1) questions Alexander's judgement and his (Alexander) action as being too reckless. As Alexander was marching down the Hydaspes River toward the Indian Ocean he had a close brush with death in the capital city of Sudrae⁷³ where he was seriously wounded (Curtius 9.4.26). He led the assault on the city, ignoring the warnings of Demophon, a wise man, and climbed the city walls where he got separated from his troops. The troops beseeched Alexander to jump back down but Alexander ignored the plea and jumped towards the enemy line. This illustration provides a view of what happened next,— Alexander courageously fights the Indian soldiers with his back protected against a large tree while his army tries to breach the defensive walls to help Alexander. Eventually the city was captured but not before Alexander was badly injured.

The scene portrayed here is chaotic with soldiers fighting, climbing the city walls, jumping onto parapets, and falling down the walls; as well as soldiers being injured, wounded, and piled in a heap as dead corpses. The presence of Alexander is unmistakable as he stands in front of a tree with his gold armor fiercely slaying the enemies, defending himself with his gold shield.

[Plate 14]

***Orsines Presents a Gift to Alexander; the Execution of Orsines*
(Fol.226r)**

This illumination represents a perfect example of the wrath of woman scorned. Here the artist has portrayed two consecutive incidents. One on the left, an indoor setting, portrays Orsines presenting gifts to Alexander contrasted with an outdoor scene on the right where Orsines is being executed. The Getty artist has already used this picture box device to present multiple stories in many of his earlier illuminations, also he has on many occasions painted two narrations, one with an indoor setting and the other with an outdoor scene to give more depth, intensity and contrast.

Orsines, a nobleman and satrap (governor) of Persia presents gifts to Alexander and his companions upon his arrival from Parsagadae, but he publicly humiliates Bagoas, (handsome eunuch, also portrayed in pl. 7) who is standing next to Alexander, deeming her (Bagoas) unworthy of his gifts. To take the revenge Bagoas poisons Alexander's mind against his satrap, with tales of his greed and treason. Unfortunately Alexander succumbs to his favorite Bagoas's insinuations, and Orsines is arrested and beheaded. A similar unfortunate incident occurred with Nabarzanes also [Pl. 7]. Orsines's last words before he was executed are said to be, "I have heard said that women once ruled Asia, but this is something really new to see--a eunuch ruling!"⁷⁴ Arrian (6.30) also wrote about Orsines's execution but his text does not mention Bagoas; Curtius (10.1.22-38) chose a more colorful episode.

Beside the main episode, the Getty illustrator has included sketchy details of some exotic animals that Alexander was said to have encountered

during his Indian campaigns, behind the execution scene beyond the walls of the castle. The Getty artist on some occasions has added his own touches by including several exotic animals⁷⁵ that Alexander was said to have encountered. Some details of these exotic animals come not from Curtius's writing but are linked to Alexander's Romance.⁷⁶

ARTISTIC INFLUENCES AND PARALLELS BETWEEN GETTY ILLUMINATIONS AND OTHER VASCO ILLUMINATIONS

As Burgundian society became more prosperous in the fifteenth century, demand for (especially) non-liturgical books increased, as did the development of new iconography.⁷⁷ Burgundian artists began to create new pattern books⁷⁸ of illustrations which sometimes served as a portfolio to present to prospective clients and also allowed artists to follow certain formulae that can be easily repeated and reproduced.⁷⁹

According to McKendrick, the Getty illustrator derived some of his inspiration from Lievan Van Latham's illustration books.⁸⁰ Six illustrations [Pl. 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 12] in the Getty manuscript reveal strong influence of the formulae developed by Lievan Van Latham. The origins of many of the overall compositional formulae in the Getty manuscripts may have had their foundation in two manuscripts of Van Latham—(1) the Chatsworth manuscript of *Gillion de Trazegnies*⁸¹ and (2) the *Histoire de Jason*⁸² from Paris.

There are two banquet scenes portrayed in the Getty manuscript. One, entitled *Alexander and the Niece of Artaxerxes III* [Pl. 6], resembles the banquet scene of Van Latham's miniature *Medea Kills Jason's Son Before*

*Him*⁸³ [Illustration 21] and by Master of Margaret of York *Alexander Listens to a Speech in His Own Praise*.⁸⁴ Though the main characters as well as the subjects of stories are completely different, the overall compositional formula is the same and visually all three looks as if they all come from one single source. The angle and placement of the banqueting table, the red canopy over the table, the placement of the balcony, as well as the focal point and the vanishing point are almost identical. In the Getty illustration the niece of Artaxerxes replaces Medea. The Getty presentation scene [Pl. 1] as well as two court scenes [Pls. 7, 12] follow the same formulae⁸⁵ of Van Latham.⁸⁶ *Alexander's illness at the Cydnus River* [Pl. 3] and *The Execution of Philotas* [Pl. 9] also derive their antecedent from two manuscripts of Van Latham's. In both illuminations [Pls. 3, 9] the overall compositional formulae have striking similarities to those of Van Latham's miniatures, plus colorful tents, decorations with shields and inscriptions, as well as the overall organization and coloring resemble Van Latham's illustrated books.

According to McKendrick, there are few manuscripts of Vasco's text⁸⁷ that come close to the Getty manuscript in their illumination program.⁸⁸ The three that come closest are:

- (1) Geneva, Publique et Universitaire & Bobliotheca Bodmeriana #53
- (2) Jena, Thuringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MS El
- (3) Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS fr. 257

All four manuscripts (Getty, Bodimer, Jena, and Paris) are datable to the 1470s because of the costumes worn by the populace. These images are closely similar because they are derived from Vasco's text and also from

several other common features such as compositional formulae, size and the subjects of the illuminations [Chart 4]. Three manuscripts (Bodimer, Jena, and Paris) share partly the illustration style of the Master of Margaret of York, though these illustrations were done by different artists, according to Winkler.⁸⁹ However there is a much closer link between the Bodimer and Jena illustrations than with the Getty volumes in terms of illuminations which duplicate figural groupings and other fine architectural details, as well as the organization of the page layout, along with textural contents.

The Bodimer manuscript has nine two-column miniatures, each at the beginning of nine books of Vasco's text like the Getty, but it has twelve one column miniatures scattered through the rest of volumes instead of four one column miniatures in the Getty. The subjects of eight large illuminations are the same as those of the Getty [Chart 4]. The illuminator of the volumes of the Bodimer manuscript was the Master of Margaret of York. The quality of general workmanship is much poorer than the Getty manuscript; the drawing and the modeling of figures are inferior, along with the color palette which is similar but less subtle.⁹⁰

The Jena manuscript also has nine two-column miniatures marking the beginning of the nine books, out of which seven illuminations depict the same subjects found in the Getty as well as in the Bodimer manuscript [Chart 4] and here also Master of Margaret of York may have been responsible for the illumination cycle. The Jena manuscript has much superior craftsmanship to the Bodimer, but it is inferior to the Getty manuscript. The drawing and modeling of the figures are much better than

that of the Bodimer, but it does not arrive at the Getty's superior skills.⁹¹ The color palette is muted in the Bodimer manuscript and not much effort is made to elaborate the costume, and the Jena volumes represent more simpler settings than the other two manuscripts (Getty and Bodimer).⁹²

The Paris volumes are the furthest removed iconographically from the Getty volumes and were once erroneously attributed to the Master of Margaret of York.⁹³ In the Paris manuscript only three large miniatures depicts the same subjects beside the prologue⁹⁴ as in the Getty and the Bodimer manuscript [Chart 4].

This is the only illustration where the choice of subject matter, illustration style, along with placement of illustration that all three manuscripts have in common with the Getty manuscript is *The Birth of Alexander*⁹⁵ [Pl. 2, illustration, Bodimer 22, Jena 23, Paris 24]. All four manuscripts overlap similar iconography with identical icons symbolizing different aspects of Alexander's life. The main focus of the illustration is the canopy bed with the dragon hovering above, two eagles perched on the roof, young Alexander riding his horse, Bucephalus and the tower of Diana at Ephesus in flames. In the Bodimer, Jena and Paris manuscript, young Alexander rides out through the palace gate; in the Bodimer and Jena, under the gaze of his father whereas in the Getty illustration, Alexander is riding his horse outdoors with the tower of Diana at Ephesus burning in the background.

The illustration *Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre*,⁹⁶ all three manuscripts (Getty, Bodimer and Paris) [Pl. 2, Illustrations 25, 26] includes

iconography which seems to have derived from a similar source.⁹⁷ The overall size and shape of the three battle ship with tall masts, filled with soldiers look alike giving credence to the fact that they all had same stylistic roots. Other compositional similarity between the Bodimer and the Paris is the portrayal of a man reaching down with both hands to pull the fallen man from the water, aboard the ship. This particular representation is not included in the Getty illustration.

In the Paris manuscript entitled *The Execution of Philotas and his Accomplices in Front of Alexander and His Army*,⁹⁸ [Illustration 27] the compositional arrangement of the manuscript, set outdoors, with Philotas being executed while surrounded by Alexander and his army is very closely related to the manuscript of the Getty as well as the Bodimer, whereas the Jena miniature has a typical indoor court setting within the architectural framework where Philotas is being executed. All three illustrations (Getty, Bodimer and Paris) have outdoor scenes that include conical shaped turrets that are repeated once again in pointed tops of the colorful tents of Alexander and his army. The groupings of soldiers as well as a soldier on the point of beheading Philotas also closely resemble the Getty and the Paris manuscripts.

Once again, three manuscript (Getty, Bodimer and Jena) illustrations entitled *Competition in Sittacene and the Placating of Sisigambis*,⁹⁹ have a close relationship in terms of iconographic components. They also depict subject matter and include characters that were not mentioned in Vasco's text. All three manuscripts included ladies in the competition: that was not a

part of Vasco's written text. Like the Getty manuscript, instead of portraying two different scenes the Bodimer [Illustration 28] and Jena artists also have combined both settings as one, so much so that Alexander is depicted only once and all the characters of both stories move freely from one story to another. Here also the grouping of human figures performing the same events of the competition are depicted in all three manuscripts with similar poses and gestures. Alexander, placating Sisigambis, is also illustrated in the similar manner in all three manuscripts.

Both the Bodimer and Jena illuminations entitled *Alexander Fights with a Lion and Kills Clitus*¹⁰⁰ has depicted truer versions of Vasco's narration than the Getty artist [Illustration 29]. Both in the Bodimer and Jena illustrations illuminations depict Alexander striking down Clitus with a sword (not spear as it was portrayed in the Getty's illumination). Also in the second narration in both the manuscripts, Alexander uses a hunting spear as narrated in Vasco's text instead of a spiked club illustrated in the Getty illumination.

The iconographic details plus the compositional formulae in the Bodimer and Jena manuscripts are closer in their rendition of their illustrations compared to the Getty's. Beside four illuminations entitled—*Birth of Alexander; Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre; Competition in Sittacene and the Placating of Sisigambis; and Alexander Fights with a Lion and Kills Clitus* other two illustrations from these two manuscripts that also echo the same features are—*The Siege of the Town of Sudracae* and *Alexander and Niece of Artaxerxes III*. In general, the grouping of the figures

appears clearly the same as do details of architectural components, and other small details such as a purse that is handed to the niece of Artaxerxes, whereas in the Getty illustration the purse is replaced by a chest.

What were the sources for these similar images and how were these similar images created? McKendrick states that written instructions could not have generated such similar compositional arrangements and strong repeatable images. Since no record of detailed written instructions has been found, these images may have been transmitted visually and verbally.¹⁰¹ He further elaborates that partial direct copying from one manuscript to other may have transpired or artists may have used a common source such as working from same model drawings of other secular documents or employing same pattern books.¹⁰²

Interest in the history of Alexander revived in the fifteenth century, and historical manuscripts, such as the Getty manuscript—*Les faits d'Alexandre le grant* “The Deeds of Alexander the Great” played an important role. Burgundian artists sought to create new iconography befitting this new interest, and Bruges and Ghent became new art centers. The secularization of art brought about many changes, and people from all walks of life from monarchs to tradesmen collected beautifully illustrated, non-liturgical as well as historical manuscripts. This evolutionary trend gave birth to profane themes and signaled the birth of the renaissance.

“They who live in history only seem to walk the earth again,” an appropriate line from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem, *The Belfry of Bruges*¹⁰³ captures the meaning, message, and definition beautifully.

The Belfry of Bruges

In the market-place of Bruges stands the belfry old and brown;
Thrice consumed and thrice rebuild, still it watches o'er the town.

As the summer morn was breaking, on that lofty tower I stood,
And the world threw off the darkness, like the weeds of widowhood. . . .

Then most musical and solemn, bring back the olden times,
With their strange, unearthly changes rang the melancholy chimes, . . .

Vision of the days departed, shadowy phantoms filled my brain;
They who live in history only seem to walk the earth again.

¹ Scot McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great : an Illuminated Manuscript of Vasco da Lucena's French Translation of the Ancient Text by Quintus Curtius Rufus* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996), 34.

² Ibid., 34.

³ Ibid., 33, 35.

⁴ Dino Formaggio & Carlo Basso ed. Peggy Craig Trans., *Book of Miniatures* (London: Peter Nevill Ltd., 1962), 135.

⁵ John Bradley, *Little book of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Methuen & Co., n.a.), 198-203.

⁶ Jonathan J.G. Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators and Their Methods of Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 148.

⁷ McKendrick, p.63-65.

⁸ Alexander, 143-44.

⁹ Walter Previnier and Wim Blockman, *The Burgundian Netherlands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 313.

¹⁰ Formaggio & Basso, 134-35.

¹¹ Lucia N. Valentine, *Ornament in Medieval Manuscripts* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), 58 ; McKendrick, 67.

¹² Elizabeth Baynham, *Alexander the Great The Unique History of Quintus Curtius* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 165-75.

¹³ Refer to Chapter 3A, Subheading-Calligraphy.

¹⁴ McKendrick, 30-33.

¹⁵ *Justice of the Emperor Otto*. Dirk Bouts, Brussels, 1473 . Musees Royaux des Beaux-Arts; *King Diodicias of Syria and his four wives Hold a Party for his thirty-three Daughters*. Jean de Wavrin, Vienna, ca. 1470 . Chrniques d'Angleterre; Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS.2534, Fol. 17; *The birth of Alexander the Great*. Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, ca.1470-75. Jena, Thuringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MS El. Fol.2; *Competition in Sittacene and the Placating of Sisigambis*. Circle of Margaret of York, ca. 1470-75. Cogny-Geneve, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, MS Bodimer 53, Fol. 64v.

¹⁶ McKendrick, 33. Also see Chapter 3A Calligraphy, for the dating of the transcription.

¹⁷ Paul Binski, "Gothic. International Gothic style, ca.1380-1440," *The Grove Dictionary of Art*. 29 Jan. 2001, online, 1-2, available from <http://www.groveart.com/tdaonline/articles/index.asp?level=T033636>

¹⁸ The Burgundians were producing lots of religious books but along with the religious books now they also stated taking interests in non religious books such as the historical themes where the religious rhetoric were distinctively absent. Also the true historical themes of Alexander (*historia*) took president over the Alexander's romance (*fabula*) where these stories (*fabula*) contained many supernatural phenomenon such as miracles and workings of divine revelation.

¹⁹ Previner and Blockman, n.pag.

²⁰ Richard Stoneman Trans. and Ed., *Legends of Alexander the Great* (London: Everyman, 1994), 10.

²¹ John Bradley, *Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Bracken Books, 1996), 195-207.

²² Alexander, 125. ; Robert Calkins, *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1983), 287.

²³ Demand for non-liturgical manuscripts was great and many times demand exceeded the supply of available books.

²⁴ Alexander, 125-143.

²⁵ Georges Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Amsterdam: B. M. Israel B.V., 1987), 7.

²⁶ Alexander, 122, 124, 149.

²⁷ J. Henry Middleton, *Illuminated Manuscripts in Classical and Mediaeval Times, Their art and Their Technique* (London: Cambridge University press, 1892), 142-3;

P. Dancona and C. Aeschlimann, *The Art of Illumination, an Anthology of Manuscripts from the Sixth to the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Phaidon Press, 1969), 125.

²⁸ McKendrick, 35-36.

²⁹ McKendrick, 49.

³⁰ Alexander, 126; Bradley, 200-201.

³¹ He worked for Philip the Good during 1457-1462. He also took commission in 1468 in Bruges again, both on the occasion of the Chapter Meeting of the Golden Fleece and the wedding of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York.

³² Both artists worked in Bruges. Dogaer, 113; *Horologium Sapientiae*. Paris, ca.1470-1475. Bibliotheque Nationale, MS. fr. 137.

³³ McKendrick, 43-49.; Dogaer, 133.

³⁴ Refer to Chart 5.

³⁵ Other presentation illustrations of Burgundian artist around late 1400s: *Vasco de Lucena presents His Translation of Les Faiz du Grand Alexandre*. By Loyset Liedet, Paris, 1468-1470. Bibliotheque Nationale, MS. fr. 22.457. fol. 1; *Vasco de Lucena Presents His Translation to Charles the Bold*. London, ca. 1470-80. British Library, MS 17 F i, Fol. 14; *Jean Wauquelin presents his Chroniques de Hainault to Duke Philip the Good*. Brussels, ca. 1446. Royal Library, Ms. 9242.

³⁶ Burgundian apparel ca. 1470.

³⁷ McKendrick, 69.

³⁸ The ladies are not dressed in the costumes that were common at the time of Alexander's birth.

³⁹ McKendrick, 72-74.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 72-73.

⁴¹ N.G.L. Hammond, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great, The so-called Vulgate Authors, Diodorus, Justin, and Curtius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 122-123; Stoneman, 38-43. (Justin 11.11.7).

⁴² In antiquity, it was commonly believed that the temple burned down as the Goddess was busy bringing Alexander into the world. The Babylonian priests who were present at

Ephesus looked on the temple's disaster as a sigh of still more disaster to occur and professed the calamity of Asia.

(Vasco 1.6, Diodorus 17.30.5), Charles Alexander Robinson, *Immortals of History Alexander the Great* (New York: Franklin Watts Inc., 1963), 2-3; Hammond, 116-124.

⁴³ McKendrick, 74.

⁴⁴ This episode also appears in Vasco's text in his first book (1.6).

⁴⁵ In the fourteenth century, historical accounts of Alexander became very popular at the same times the medieval prose of Alexander Romance, did not die with the emergence of new historical phenomenon.

D. J. A. Ross, *Studies in the Alexander Romance* (London: Pindar Press, 1985), 185-87.

⁴⁶ Alexander, 149.

⁴⁷ Plutarch, Arrian and Aristobulus.

⁴⁸ Hammond, 120-122.

⁴⁹ The Getty's artist has blurred the boundaries in plate 5. There are two episodes but Alexander is drawn once, therefore one image of Alexander represents both the stories.

⁵⁰ McKendrick, 78.

⁵¹ Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna, ca. 1500s.

⁵² *La Premiere Guerre Punique*. Brussels. ca. 1460s. Royal Library, MS 10777, fol. 46.

Previner and Blockman, 21, 105.

⁵³ In all the other plates The Getty's artist has created different picture windows, using architectural elements for each of the stories.

⁵⁴ McKendrick, 80.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Around ca. 1475, another grouping of ladies with similar iconography is illustrated in *Obedience Welcomes Devout Soul to the Garden of Consolation*. Pierre, d'Ailly, *Jardin de vertueuse consolation*. Master of the *Jardin de vertueuse consolation*, Paris, ca. 1475.

Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 1026 Fol.1. This suggests that illustrators may have developed their compositions from the common pattern books of other master artists.

⁵⁷ McKendrick; George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, ed. D. J. A. Ross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), n.pag., repr. New York, 1987; Herwig Buntz, *Die deutsche Alexanderdichtung des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart: Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1997), 33-36.

⁵⁸ McKendrick, 80.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 82.

⁶⁰ According to Curtius (6.7.1-7.1.1).

⁶¹ Valentine, 56, 58.

⁶² Many were real but other plots may have been his paranoia.

⁶³ McKendrick, 87-88.

⁶⁴ Philotas implicated his own father Perminion in the plot against Alexander.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 88; George Cary, n.pag.

⁶⁶ Mortimer Wheeler, *Flames Over Persepolis Turning-point in History* (New York: Reynal & Company, 1968), 91-92.

⁶⁷ Otto Pacht, *Book illumination in the Middle Ages* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1994), 194-200.

⁶⁸ McKendrick, 99.

⁶⁹ Also narrated by Vasco (7.4).

⁷⁰ McKendrick, 94.

⁷¹ The Artist has slightly modified the image. In the illustration Alexander is using a sword instead of lance as written in the text of Curtius. Though the weapon drawn is different, it

does not detract from the overall feeling of the illustration, which is reprehensible and appalling: A young king murdering his respectable Macedonian old Guard, who had served both Alexander and his father, Philip, faithfully.

⁷² McKendrick, 96.

⁷³ Arrian (6.8.4) and Plutarch (63.3) refereed to this city as Mallians.

⁷⁴ McKendrick, 98.

⁷⁵ also illustrated in pl.2.

⁷⁶ David John Athole Ross, *Alexander Historiatus; A Guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature 2nd ed.* (Frankfort am Main: Athenaum, 1988).

⁷⁷ McKendrick, 63-65.

⁷⁸ This was not an uncommon practice. In earlier times many artists also had created such types of device.

⁷⁹ Alexander, 125-143.

⁸⁰ McKendrick, 38-40.

⁸¹ Dogaer, 136; David Aubert, *Roman de Trazegnies*. Charts worth collection, Duke of Devonshire, Fol. No.7535.

⁸² *Histoire de Jason*. Lievan Van Latham, ca. 1470. Paris Bibliotheque Nationale, MS fr. 331, Owner Raoul Lefevre.

⁸³ *Histoire de Jason*. Lieven Van Latham, ca. 1470. Paris Bibliotheque Nationale, MS fr. 331, Fol. 139V.

⁸⁴ *Alexander Listens to a Speech in His Own Praise*. Vienna, ca. 1475. Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek, by master of Margaret of York, Ms. 2566, fol. 122.

⁸⁵ The compositional arrangements include a throne, a red canopy trimmed with green edging, a placement of balcony etc.

⁸⁶ M. P. J. Martens, ed., *Lodwijk Van Gruuthuse: Mecenat en Europees Diplomaat*, ca. 1427-1492. Bruges, (1992), Plates 115.

⁸⁷ *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant*, The Deeds of Alexander the Great. French translation by Vasco da Lucena.

⁸⁸ McKendrick, 50-61.

⁸⁹ F. Winkler, *Die Flämische Buchmalerei des XV. und XVI. Jahrhunderts: Kunst und Werker von den Brüdern van Eyck bis Simon Bening* (Leipzig: 1925), 86. cited in McKendrick, 39-43.

⁹⁰ McKendrick, 52-60.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ F. Winkler, 86. cited in McKendrick, 39-43.

⁹⁴ Only Getty and Paris manuscripts contain prologue: *Vasco de Luccena Presents His Translation to Charles the Bold*. Other two manuscripts Bodimer and Jena does not have the Prologue, Presentation scene.

⁹⁵ *Birth of Alexander*.

(1) Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, Bodimer, ca. 1470-75. MS 53 fol. 3r [Illustration 22];

(2) Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, Jena, MS El Fol. 2r [Illustration 23];

(3) Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, Paris, MS fr. 257 Fol. 1r [Illustration 24].

⁹⁶ *Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre*.

(1) Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, ca. 1470-75. Bodimer MS 53, Fol. 38r

[Illustration 25]; (2) Anonymous South Netherlandish artist, Paris, MS fr. 257 Fol. 39v [Illustration 26].

⁹⁷ McKendrick, 53-57.

⁹⁸ *Execution of Philotas*.

Anonymous South Netherlandish artist, Paris MS 257, Fol. 114v [Illustration 27].

⁹⁹ *Competition at Sittacene and the Placating of Sisigambis*.

Circle of the Master of Margaret of York. Bodimer MS 53, Fol. 64r [Illustration 28].

¹⁰⁰ *Alexander Kills Clitus*.

Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, Jena MS EL Fol. 89r [Illustration 29].

¹⁰¹ McKendrick, 55-58.

¹⁰² McKendrick has earlier suggested the artist of the Getty's illustration may have used pattern books created by Lieven Van Latham in Antwerp; McKendrick, 55-58, 125-143.

¹⁰³ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Favorite Poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (New York: International Collector Library, n.a.), 98.

CHAPTER 4
Section B

**TIMURID MANUSCRIPTS OF THE SHAHNAMA AND THE KHAMSA
Illuminations**

Persian miniature, the courtly art that flourished in the Timurid court, depicted subject matter derived from romantic and epic themes. This courtly art prospered and was nurtured under the Timurid sultans in their great institutions of the *kitabkhana*. The tradition of the *kitabkhana* started very early in the Islamic world. The royal libraries (*kitabkhana*) of medieval Islam, those of Baghdad,¹ Cairo,² and Cordoba³ were much celebrated, and the Timurids derived much inspiration from these great institutions, their activities serving as models for the Timurids' own *kitabkhana*.⁴ The historical account of the immense holdings, for example, of the Fatimid dynasty in Cairo, estimate that it had from one hundred and twenty thousand to two million volumes.⁵ The great palace library of al-Hakam II (912-76) in Cordoba contained more than four hundred thousand manuscripts⁶ and the magnitude of the Baghdad *kitabkhana* were unparalleled in the world at that time.⁷

Besides maintaining these gigantic institutions and producing enormous numbers of volumes, one of the important components of these institutions was to attract the best artisans, translators and calligraphers.⁸ These individuals translated classical literature from the ancient times, producing mathematical, medical, mechanical, historical manuscripts, as well as books on a wide variety of religious and secular subjects as beautifully

illuminated manuscripts.⁹ These institutions helped to articulate the vision as well as the rhetoric of the ruling elite, and the Timurid sultans took full advantage of this *kitabkhana* to create the aura of indisputable leadership.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE *KITABKHANA* AND ITS INFLUENCE ON TIMURID ART

The powerful Il-Khanid vizier Rashiduddin in the early fourteenth century established the *kitabkhana* Rab-i Rashidi¹⁰ that served as a model for the Timurids in establishing their own *kitabkhana*, and also helped in the development of their visual vocabulary. The surviving *waqfiyya* (endowment deed)¹¹ for the Rab-i Rashidi talked about the systematic manuscript production of the Il-Khanid *kitabkhana*. The religious as well as historical compilations were made according to special guidelines, with predetermined specifications for paper, script, collation, gilding, binding and most importantly the illustrations.¹² These volumes bespeak the presence of systematically coordinated manuscript production methods, which ensured their accuracy, as well as uniform appearance. These methods not only helped to expedite the production but also helped in the proliferation of official paintings, and helped to expound the rhetoric legitimizing Il-Khanid power.

Timurid *kitabkhana* developed their own systematic production procedures and were responsible for producing an enormous number of volumes in a short time.¹³ The manuscripts helped to further the political agenda of various princes and became an essential part of their new culture. With the aid of the *kitabkhana*, the Timurids cultivated a facade that

projected a carefully crafted princely vision, conveying a powerful political message as well as creating a sophisticated and refined visual image of the dynasty. The prolific outpouring of art and literature from the *kitabkhana* helped to define the dynasty's cultural ambitions, and it also created general uniformity in their artistic production that became emblematic of their reign by the early fifteenth century.

Timur was well acquainted with the potential power of the *kitabkhana*, and he was also mindful of the vast body of Persian literature it generated. He was keenly aware of the importance of the manuscripts that would help him to legitimize his rule and establish him as the rightful successor of the Islamic world.¹⁴

The earlier two, the *Shahnama*¹⁵ and the *Khamasa* of Nizami,¹⁶ have illustrations produced at the beginning of the Timurid dynasty that are in some ways the most conservative works produced in their *kitabkhana*.¹⁷ The compositions are not complex, based on a simple organizational formula with rather stiff figures, and painted with few background details, yet these images carry a straightforward message and are narrative in their orientation. However these illustrations represent a substantial departure from earlier Persian paintings. The color palette is much brighter with idealized settings, bold action and gestures, decorative patterns and strong rhythm which contrast with the more naturalistic paintings of the Il-Khanids. This new interest in abstracted and idealized imagery had an impact on Timurid painting that continued until the end of the fifteenth century.¹⁸

JALAYRID LEGACY AND THE BIRTH OF TIMURID ART

According to Brend the classical period of Persian painting began in the late fourteenth century with the patronage of Sultan Ahmed Jalayr.¹⁹ The Jalayrids had a refined, lyrical style that also provided a foundation for Timurid book illumination²⁰ under Shah Rukh and Iskandar Sultan.²¹ The Jalayrid master Junayd incorporated some of the earlier elements that had been adopted by artists during Timur's reign such as color palette, idealized settings, contrived but simple compositions and strong rhythm, but Jalayrid artists added far more details with more complex compositions adding intensity to the illuminations [Illustration 30].²²

Tightly compiled scenes and subtle rhythms have a fairy-tale quality that transcends the narrative function. The refined color palette is lighter and brighter than before, with preference for cooler hues in various shades of blue, green, and turquoise, accented with vermilion and yellow.²³ Minute details along with delicately drawn figures depict the romance of the Persian heroes and heroines. The proportions of the figures have changed from the earlier, larger and stubbier, to now where the figures are more refined and elegant, smaller in proportion within the illustrations, yet they retain a certain naïveté and freshness. The outdoor settings such as gardens, forests and palace courtyards are idealized with charming water fountains, flowing rivers, delicate shrubbery and flowers, settings with which Sultan Ahmed was familiar.

The Timurid *kitabkhana* strove to achieve esthetic standards set by the Jalayrid artists from Baghdad and Tabriz and the Timurid artists sought

to create even more refined and charming images that resonated throughout the fifteenth century.²⁴ Not only did Timurid artists adapt many Jalayrid elements in their manuscript illuminations, they surpassed them and produced brilliant, technically refined works that raised the standards for the future artwork of the dynasty.

In the fifteenth century the interior and exterior of the architecture took center stage in the Timurid miniatures with vertical format, allowing elaborate and detailed representations of surfaces decorated with ornamental brickwork, mosaic ceramic tiles, stucco moldings, woodcarvings, luxurious carpets and delicate textiles. Interesting architectural forms were created by juxtaposing various shapes, materials and colors on the two-dimensional plane of the page; no attempts however, were made to create a realistic three-dimensional environment.

Iskandar Sultan was fascinated by the Jalayrid style and brought it to light in the collection of manuscripts made for him which not only include the great Persian epics like the *Shahnama* and the *Iskandarnama*, but also a variety of other subjects including romance, lyrical poems, music, astronomy, mathematics, geometry, religious law and science. The *Khamasa*²⁵ prepared for the Timurid prince Iskandar in 1410 reveals a technical refinement, with detailed interiors and exteriors, along with delicately drawn figures that exhibit romantic qualities. The exquisite illustrations in the *Shahnama*²⁶ prepared for Ibrahim Sultan around 1435 are also executed in the same manner with softer touches that express lyrical qualities.

This aesthetic shift brought about by Timur's descendants— Shah Rukh, Baysunghur, Iskander Sultan, Ibrahim Sultan, Ulugh-Beg and Mohammed Juki is much more evident when compared with the manuscripts produced during Timur's reign in the last decade of the thirteenth century and the first decade of the fourteenth century. Refined lines, vibrant colors and a carefully detailed foreground and background emphasize the differences from the illustrations of Timur, which are simpler in nature: large figures with Eastern facial features and clothing, and landscapes with fewer details against plain backgrounds. These lyrical and refined illuminations seem incompatible with Timur's personal taste, vision and objectives.

TIMURID SCHOOLS OF PAINTING

The mid fourteenth century was the beginning of the classical style of miniature paintings. Simply drawn landscapes with high horizons and some complexity of composition as well as a rich palette of colors characterize this style. In the course of the late fourteenth century, a new style was developed by the *kitabkhana* largely under Chinese influence and during the fifteenth century under the Herat school this style found its ultimate classical expression.²⁷ The meeting of old and new styles took place at different times and in different centers.²⁸ Many painting styles were developed under different Timurid descendants,²⁹ who promoted their own individual taste in their *kitabkhana*.³⁰ Varied styles were also due to geographical regions, political alliances or turmoil, and the availability of artists. Unlike Burgundian art where the emphasis was on individual artists who created their own art to be sold in the open market or the artists were given

individual commissions, where as (unlike Burgundian art) various Timurid art styles or schools originated from their *kitabkhana* where groups of artists worked in concert to create works of art.

The Shiraz School

Iskandar Sultan³¹ had a flourishing *kitabkhana* in Shiraz, the southwest region of Iran, and during his short reign he is known to have produced seventeen complete or fragmentary manuscripts that are connected to him by documentary evidence or scholarly attributions.³² But by the 1420s the center of activities had shifted to the northeast as Iskandar Sultan lost his power in 1414, Sultan Ahmed Jalayr died in 1410, and Baysunghur captured Tabriz from the Qara Quyunlu in 1420, these events that ultimately collapsed the western region's artistic dominance. The early flowering of this center of painting developed under Ibrahim Sultan ibn Shah Rukh in Shiraz who became governor of Fars from 1414 to 1434. He was a bibliophile and a noted calligrapher [Illustration 40].³³

The later Shiraz school³⁴ with its dynamic energy produced many fine manuscripts. The *Shahnama*³⁵ produced during Ibrahim Sultan's leadership represents the true Shiraz style, unlike the lyrical style of the earlier Shiraz school. It has a strong narrative style with simple compositions and large figures and is a direct antithesis of the refined style that was being developed in Herat by Baysunghur at that time. By 1440s the Shiraz style had evolved and become more aristocratic in its movements, yet it still retained some of its earlier characteristics by keeping the narrative style with large figures,

and it continued the *chinoiserie* decorations, but now a sly sense of humor was added.

A Nizami manuscript³⁶ produced around the 1440s bespoke of this new style. A richly decorated *Shahnama*³⁷ dedicated to Ibrahim Sultan reveals some of the earlier characteristics of the 1420, such as the simple landscape, the high horizon, vigorous action, unlike Baysunghur's *Shahnama* of the Herat school produced around the same time. The large scale *Shahnama*³⁸ dated 1444 also represents bold actions, rich and intense colors, and the delineation of figures, cloud forms and foliage is representative of the Shiraz school. No records are found to indicate that it is from Shiraz but Robinson suggests that the stylistic attributes definitely point to the Shiraz school and he further states that the double-paged frontispiece in the Cleveland Museum of Art³⁹ belongs to this manuscript.⁴⁰

The Timurids continued to rule Fars until 1452. But after the death of Ibrahim Sultan, the Shiraz school began to decline a little for a few years although it continued to produce manuscripts under the patronage of two ethnic dynasties, the Qara Quyunlu and the Aq Quyunlu, from the mid-fifteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Uzun Hasan shifted his capital from Shiraz to Tabriz further undermining the importance of Shiraz.

The Yazd School

In the 1440s the Yazd school⁴¹ [Illustration 48C]⁴² gave birth to its own independent style and produced a substantial amount of miniatures.⁴³ The illuminations showed originality and vivid imagination, accompanied by a

sense of humor. The *Shahnama*⁴⁴ produced in 1445 is attributed to either the Shiraz or the Yazd school, and it reveals both the Shiraz as well as the Yazd influences. Another late jewel of Shiraz style is the Teignmouth *Shahnama* of 1457 now in the collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, which exhibits the dynamic influence of Ibrahim Sultan.⁴⁵

The Herat School

Due to the political struggles in the southwest of Iran, the Herat school⁴⁶ in the east stood as an undisputed center of Timurid power and patronage in the remainder of the fifteenth century. Shah Rukh as reigning monarch implemented many of the ideas pioneered in western Iran by Sultan Ahmed Jalayr and Iskandar Sultan and produced a vast body of work⁴⁷ that showed the heritage of Jalayrid excellence. It is clearly characterized as the center of the classical style of Timurid art. Shah Rukh, and later his son Baysunghur, built the Herat⁴⁸ *kitabkhana* at the Herat court in 1420, attracting the best artists, writers, calligraphers, bookbinders, and various craftsmen from all regions of Iran.⁴⁹ The Herat *kitabkhana* was famous for its artistic brilliance because the illuminations had clarity of design, skillful compositional style, and lyricism, along with a beautiful color palette that revealed the romanticism of subject matter [Illustration 31].⁵⁰

The production of beautiful manuscripts continued in Herat after Baysunghur's death by the members of the royal family, Baysunghur's brother Mohammed Juki, his son Ala al-Daula, and Abu al-Qasim Babur and also by the wife of Mohammed Juki who married Abu al-Qasim after her husband's death. The last Timurid ruler was Sultan Husain Baikara (r.

1469-1506) great grandson of Timur, under his patronage Timurid art and culture continued to flourish and reached its zenith due to the great artist Bihzad.⁵¹ His rendition of human figures exudes a breath of empathy and a depth of feelings which added a new dimension to Persian painting.

The *Khamasa*⁵² completed for Shah Rukh in 1431 has many characteristics of the Jalayrids, but now some innovative touches are added, such as Chinese inspirations, and at the same time Shah Rukh has tried to codify the esthetic standards and standardize the compositions thus confirming the fact that the dynasty continued to encourage innovation even while rigorously codifying the earlier forms.⁵³

Thirty-eight illustrations of the *Khamasa* for Shah Rukh display the western lyrical style, with an improved quality in pigments and now human figures begin to display some gestures. The illustration *The Palace of Khawarnaq* has an idealized background with tufts of grass and flower bushes showing the Jalayrid as well as the Chinese heritage [illustration # 32].⁵⁴ In the foreground the walls of the palace are painted in a bright orange brick color and decorated with a geometrical design of a star dotting the corners of each hexagon that is made to resemble fine brickwork; a royal blue filigree border is positioned on the top of the wall along with gold letters accentuating the border.

The group of men clothed in bright gowns with Persian turbans on the right side of the palace wall have Chinese facial features, once again emphasizing Chinese influence. The proportions of these figures are anatomically incorrect with small stocky bodies and turbans emphasizing the

largeness of their head. This suggests that the artists worked in the style of the Shiraz school⁵⁵

Royal blue, bright yellow and orange, pure white, emerald and olive green tents made with intricately designed cloth repose at the back of the walls. The *Kitabkhana* played a major role in the design and production of fabrics for the tents as it is well documented in the *Arzadasht*. One of the famous artists Khwaja Abdul-Rahim is documented as having provided designs for the tent makers, further evidence of this is found in the Diez album,⁵⁶ which contains a pounced workshop design as a pattern for a tent panel.⁵⁷

One of the literary genres influenced by the poetic vision was the great Iranian national epic, the *Shahnama* that told the history of pre-Islamic Iran, recounting the adventures, as well as the struggles of the kings and heroes. Some of the stories are historically true and some are influenced by myths and folklore. Many stories of Alexander are derived from historical writings of the ancient vulgate authors,⁵⁸ some from the Pseudo-Callisthenus tradition,⁵⁹ and a few from the Fabulous Romances.⁶⁰

As a lover of literary manuscripts, Shah Rukh commissioned many Iranian epics such as, the *Shahnama*, but unfortunately at present only two illustrated royal copies have survived his reign; both are loose fragments.⁶¹ Shah Rukh was aware of the potent power of the *Shahnama* as it was viewed more than a piece of literature. It was considered to be a political treatise that addressed the deep seeded conceptions of honor, morality and justice. These manuscripts helped to legitimize Shah Rukh's aspirations and political

objectives. The illustrations included the local costumes, contemporary Iranian architecture, fifteenth century plants and gardens; thus this was Shah Rukh's attempt to assimilate himself into the contemporary Iranian culture [Illustration 33].⁶²

One of the greatest masters of Persian illumination was Kamal al-Din Bihzad (1460-1535) who changed the tenor of the late fifteenth century and early sixteenth century illuminations. He worked during the golden age of artistic achievement in the late Timurid and early Safavid periods, and enjoyed the patronage of Mir Ali Shir, Chief Minister at court and Sultan Husain Baikara himself in the Herat *kitabkhana*.⁶³

Bihzad's major contribution to Timurid art was to bring naturalism to manuscript paintings by humanizing his characters. He brought about a sense of immediacy in his painting and painted figures giving them grand gestures creating a beautiful theatrical stage where the characters seem to come alive. His illuminations represented a more intimate world where figures relate to each other as human beings and become active participants in the natural world or architectural environments. His illuminations have a sense of harmony, vivid color palette, graceful form, and lively composition mingled with a dry sense of humor. Bihzad brought many new and innovative ideas to Persian miniature painting, and at the same time he followed and practiced all the basic principles of earlier traditions preserving the integrity of vision which was the Persian miniature painting's unique heritage. Ebadollah Bahari, author of *Bihzad*, wrote, "... to understand his illustrations is to experience a deep spirituality combined with great

admiration for the way he has translated a literary and historic passage on to the painted pages” [Illustration 37].⁶⁴

The Turkman school

Turkman schools reached their zenith in the second half of the fifteenth century but the style began to emerge in Tabriz by the 1419s under Jafar al-Tabrizi.⁶⁵ This style began to mature under the Black Sheep Turkman ruler of Azarbayjan by the mid-fifteenth century. The Turkman style represents the synthesis of both the Shiraz as well as the Herat Schools. Both the *Khamasa*⁶⁶ and the *Shahnama*⁶⁷ produced around the 1450s reveal the mixed styles of both Timurid Schools. The Turkman style resembles so closely to its eastern neighbors that many times it is impossible to distinguish one style from other.⁶⁸ [illustration 36]⁶⁹

ILLUSTRATIONS: THE KHAMSA OF NIZAMI⁷⁰

[Illustration 34]

***Iskandar Judges the Greek and Chinese Paintings*
MS. 13.228.3 Fol.322a**

Nizami has tried to demonstrate a connection between science and art in this elaborate and complicated work of art where Iskandar is asked to adjudicate at a discussion on who is superior in the craft of drawing and painting (*san'at al-naksh wa l-suwar*),⁷¹ the Chinese or the Greek. This enigmatic story also suggests two aspects of artistic activities: one, active production of the images (painter) and two, the passive reception of visual stimuli (audience).

In his quest to conquer eastern empires Iskandar is confronted with a Chinese leader. This event occurs during Iskandar's visit to the Khaqan of

China. In the course of varied discussions both the leaders disagree on the subject of the achievements of various races and in particular whether the Greek or Chinese artists excelled in the art of drawing and painting (*san'at al-naksh wa l-suwar*). To settle this argument the Khaqan gives both artists a room (*suffa*) with a curtain in the middle and tells them to create their own masterpieces on the opposite walls. While the Greek artist begins to paint on his side of the wall, the Chinese begins to polish the other side and burnish it. When they are finished, the curtain is lifted and Alexander is asked to judge the paintings.

Alexander is perplexed for both the images looked the same. He then orders the curtain to be lowered. When the curtain is lowered the Chinese painting disappears, only to reappear when the curtain is raised. Thus Alexander reasons out that the Chinese painting is the reflection of the Greek painting and gives his judgement. He states that while Greek artists are superior in painting (*surat-gari*) the Chinese are superior in polishing (*salq*) thus concluding "both are an aid to vision" (*basr*).

There are many interpretations to this complex story. Poets Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207-1273) in *Mathnavi-yi Manavi* and Ghazali (1058-1111) in *Ihya ulum al-din* suggest that this story illustrates the superiority of the mystical experience over acquired knowledge. Ghazali suggests that while the *ulama* (Greek) strive to accumulate scientific knowledge the *Sufi* (Chinese) saints polish their hearts until the radiance of God shines in them. Another interpretation suggests that the reflection of the painting is like a mirror—the heart of the Sufi represents a mirror (*ayina*) which receives

reflections (*aqs*) or impressions (*nishan*).⁷² While another interpretation states— “the wonders of the Greek art shines from it with greater radiance and glitter . . . and the beauty of their [Chinese] side increases with increased burnishing.”⁷³

This incident also has a scientific flavor—the credible demonstration of the reflective powers of polished surfaces and Ettinghausen theorizes that Nizami may have opted for this story to demonstrate the scientific theory used in an optical treatise.⁷⁴

Because of the difficulty in illustrating the complexity of spatial reflection, this subject was rarely illustrated, but the artist of the *Khamisa* has illustrated this story quite convincingly. In order to suggest the reflection of the Greek painting the artist has turned the walls of the room at ninety degrees so that they are parallel with the surface of the page. The Greek painting is shown on the right while the Chinese reflection is on the left. In the foreground at the bottom of the painting a youth on a horseback is attacking a lion with a sword, as our vision travels upward to the middle ground another youth on the saddle is shooting a gazelle with a bow and arrow, his torso turns to bring our eyes to the graceful gazelle.

Two youths are seated against a yellowish-tan background on the upper side of the painting with one youth holding a wine vessel and other pointing upwards. This entire scene is reflected in reverse on the Chinese wall. Only in the reflection is the head of the third youth visible, his torso concealed by the curtain. The only difference between the Greek painting and the Chinese reflection is the background color. In the Greek painting the

foreground is white with a pale blue edge and the background is painted with a yellowish-tan color, but in reflection both the foreground as well as background is in burnished gold, suggesting that the walls have been polished to a high sheen by the Chinese.

Iskandar is painted sitting at the back of the room on a stool with a perplexed expression, accompanied by his two companions, peering at the walls. The spectators on a balcony are peeping anxiously watching Iskandar and in the far background the flowing curtains are pushed aside for Iskandar to view both the paintings. The artist has skillfully created multi-layered planes to give a sense of space, depth and distance.

It is difficult to know what interpretation if any the artist decided to illustrate but his cleverly composed illumination demonstrates his understanding of the optical problem involved.

[Illustration 35]
Iskandar Inspects His Own Portrait
MS.870 Fol.235b.

Iskandar, disguised as his own envoy, visits the court of Queen Nushaba (Candace) of Barda (Andalusia). Queen Nushaba recognizes Iskandar but he repeatedly denies his identity. The Queen confronts Iskandar stating, “look whose face is this on this image” and shows his portrait, painted on silk that was in her possession. Iskandar unrolls the silk scroll and sees his own face, painted with a perfect likeness of himself.

The artist has cleverly created an interesting setting. Iskandar is portrayed sitting on a high stool with a small round mirror in his hand. He is intently gazing at his portraiture and at the same time peering in the mirror

comparing his reflection (*nishan*) with the portrait. The artist was mindful of the accuracy of the portraiture that represented a very close likeness to Iskandar. His careful rendition of Iskandar's facial features, the shape of his face, the drooping mustaches, small goatee, straight eyebrows with almond shaped eyes and the crown are identical both in the portraiture as well as in person.

The artist has accurately used Nizami's text as his guideline by representing a physical reflection (*nishan*) of his image, whereas the Sufi poet Jalal al-Din Rumi uses the word *nishan* to describe the mystical experience to receive Allah in their hearts. According to Seyyed Nasr, Islamic art and spirituality is closely related. He suggests that man exists in the physical manifestation of this world but at the same time he is surrounded by higher levels of metaphysical and cosmological spirit from above, knowledge beyond the comprehension of the ordinary believers but only revealed to the intellectual elite.⁷⁵

This miniature is very similar to the Illustration 34, *Iskandar Judges the Greek and Chinese Painting*. In both the illustrations Iskandar is portrayed identically with identical facial features, similar posture, and even the stool on which he sits, with one leg folded under him, is exactly alike. Beside identical stools the groupings of the men with identical turbans and facial features and postures are very closely related to Illustration 34. The style of painting of both the illuminations, along with similarities in portrayal of varied elements, and the accurate understanding and representation of the

stories, Ettinghausen suggests both the illuminations are done by the same artist or created in the same *kitabkhana*.⁷⁶

[Illustration 36]
Birth of Alexander
MS.387 Fol.306b.

According to the Persian legend Alexander or Iskandar or Dhul-Qarnain, came from the same royal Iranian lineage as the great Persian ruler, Darab.⁷⁷

Darab (Darius Codomanus's father) defeated Failakus (Philip, the king of Macedonia) in two fierce battles within three days, and Failakus and his army fled back to Rum. To save face, Failakus offered his daughter's hand in marriage to Darab, which would further enhance his prestige to have a powerful son-in-law. The princess was very beautiful and Darab was enchanted by her. After long negotiations for the tribute Darab married the princess. One night, as the princess, adorned in her fineries, perfumed and looking ravishing, was sleeping by the king's side, she exhaled a pungent breath. Darab summoned the physicians and the cure was found for the princess's bad-breath. The special herb, known in Rum as "Iskandar" was given to the princess. Although the lovely princess was now as fragrant as musk, Darab's affections had waned for the princess and she was sent back to her father. There she discovered she was pregnant and kept the news to herself. After nine months she gave birth to a son and named him Iskandar (Alexander), for she held the name to be auspicious, as she had found the remedy for her illness through this herb. Failakus embraced the child as his own and he became the rightful heir to the throne of Rum and Darab's name

went unmentioned. In the meanwhile Darab married again and his other son (Dara) succeeded to the throne of Iran. In the center of the illumination Failakus (Philip of Macedonia) astride a beautiful horse is accompanied by his three attendants on the horse. One of the horsemen is carrying a hawk. All four of them are intently watching a footman who is about to receive the newborn baby Iskandar from his mother.

The illustration is painted in the refined Turkman style that was practiced in the reign of Yaqub Beg. It is meticulously executed with graceful lines, and a subtle color palette. It is a beautiful narrative scene that radiates deep feelings. Failakus is dressed in contemporary Iranian regalia worn by the royalty with a typical crown worn by the Turkman Sultans of that time. Failakus's wife (Olympias) is reposed against a wall, also dressed in the contemporary costumes of Yaqub Beg period with a beautiful veil covering her face. Modesty is important in Persian paintings especially in the portrayal of women; therefore, though the queen is giving birth, she is illustrated fully clothed with a baby on her lap indicating the birth of her son. The figures are well proportioned with the graceful 's' curve: their head bent slightly forward with contours of the shoulder and torso creating elegant and graceful curvaceous lines, typical of the Turkman figures.⁷⁸ Horses look smooth and elegant with their front legs lifted to indicate the graceful gait. The illumination exhibits distinct Chinese influence in the overall effect of the scenery with a high horizon, swirling clouds, knotty tree trunks, and in the portrayal of bushes and flowers which are prototypical of other Timurid schools also.

The Getty manuscript also includes the illustration— *The Birth of Alexander*. Both the illustrations are diametrically opposed to each other. Both illustrate the same story, *The Birth of Alexander* and both are successful in its narrative and illustrative objectives yet both project completely different sentiments.

Burgundian illumination is very complex, full of symbolism and has many layers of hidden meanings. It depicts an indoor scene with Olympias surrounded by a luxurious setting such as, a grand canopied bed, with maids waiting, red satin drapes, silk bedspread, grand architectural elements, and fine furniture befitting the arrival of the future king. The inclusion of symbolism and layers of hidden messages reiterate the greatness of the future king.⁷⁹ Olympias is naked, sitting proudly on her bed having just given birth to Alexander. The illustration exudes opulence and extravagance that is essential to the story and enhances its drama.

The Persian miniature depicts an outdoor scene, with knotty trees, graceful hills, and pretty flower bushes, with Olympias reclining against a wall having just given birth to Alexander. Unlike the nakedness of Olympias in the Burgundian miniature, here she is fully clothed with a veil covering her face. In Burgundian illustration only ladies were present; here she is surrounded by all males, Failakus (Philip) and his men watch this event from the horses. An important similarity between both the images is in the portrayal of their costumes, although both miniatures illustrate different styles of clothes, they represent the contemporary costumes of that era⁸⁰ symbolizing their own unique culture. The Persian miniature is simple,

uncomplicated, graceful and charming with no symbolism or hidden messages.

[Illustration 37]
Iskandar Visiting the Hermit
Or.6810 Fol.273a.

Iskandar visits a hermit, who lives in a nearby cave and seeks guidance from this learned old man. Iskandar is frustrated, because his army is unable to make headway after fiercely attacking the bandit's castle for many weeks. In total despair he seeks guidance from the hermit he has heard about. After listening to Iskandar, the hermit decides to help him and the hermit tells Iskandar that the power of his prayers will cause the bandits to surrender.

During the second half of the fifteenth century, religious groups, especially Sufi or mystical orders gained popularity and became an important political and social force. Their beliefs became an important part of their culture; therefore, late fourteenth-century illuminations depict many stories of powerful rulers visiting hermits, khadir, ascetics, sages or fakir affirming the importance of their association with mystical faith.

Kamal al-Din Bihzad, acknowledged as the grand master of Persian paintings, was also a believer of mysticism and Sufi ideology. Bihzad has created this masterful illumination with a realistic and faithful rendering of the text of Nizami. The illumination depicts the ruggedness of the terrain with outcroppings of rocks and the invincible castle of the bandits in the background. A sense of depth is created by the successive rows of rocks that change colors as our eyes move upward to the far end of the background and

rest on the forbidding castle with its angular construction. Some of the bandits are shown on the roof, guarding the castle. The castle walls are decorated with colored bricks and finely designed tiles with decorative crenellation edging the top. In contrast Bihzad has created a serene foreground scene with a sense of spirituality where the hermit sits at the opening of the cave under a tree with colorful autumn leaves, facing Iskandar and his attendants. This incident takes place at night and it is cleverly indicated by a torchbearer in the lower foreground standing with his flaming torch.

It is a beautifully choreographed scene revealing Bihzad's mastery. The catalog of the British Museum suggests that Bihzad has portrayed Iskandar in the likeness of Husain Baikara.⁸¹ In the mid to the late fourteenth centuries, illuminations took precedence over the text and the text box got smaller (In this full-page illumination Bihzad has inserted a small text box in the center right.), or sometimes the text was entirely eliminated from the illumination.

**[Illustrations 38A & 38B]
Iskandar and the Seven Sages
Or.6810 Fol.214r.**

The illumination is exquisitely designed, cleverly executed, beautifully composed, and colorful; it illustrates an intense conversation between Iskandar and the seven prominent sages (wise and learned men) who are discussing the secrets and the origin of creation.⁸² Seated in a semicircle with an incense burner in the middle, the sages are portrayed as having profound dialogue; some are engaged in serious conversation and some are in deep

contemplation. Aristotle, seated to the right of Iskandar, is holding a dialogue with few Sages who are listening intently, whereas the last sage on the left (wearing a green gown) is fully engrossed in his own thought; the two sages on the right (independent of the general conversation) seem to discuss some matters of their own. In the foreground against the palace walls, and in front of the palace door, guards stand vigilantly and two officers walk in front of the garden door to the palace along the red railing in the background. Every individual is given an expressive face and a delightful gesture and each character portrays his unique personality, a common feature of Bihzad's illuminations. In the middle ground, the seven sages sitting on beautifully designed carpets, produce an interesting contrast with the geometrical tile designs.⁸³ The inner garden of the palace has flowering bushes and trees that rise above the railing and against the gold background (sky), and extend over the margins.

This illumination is attributed to Bihzad. The year 1494-5 is written above the balcony suggesting that it must have been illustrated around that time. A small text box is placed on the upper left-hand corner of the illustration. No signature is found in the illustration (Bihzad did not sign many of his earlier manuscripts), and if one ever existed, it may have been in the margin which has been trimmed. Because of the masterful composition, expert decorative style, color palette, and inclusion of some characteristically Bihzadian elements, several experts have attributed this illumination to Bihzad.⁸⁴

[Illustration 39]

Iskandar Beating the Drum to Repel the Sea Monsters

Or.6810 Fol.225v.

Iskandar sails to China from India, where he encounters dangerous and strong turbulent waters. The captain at once orders the fleet to stop fearing shipwrecks. One of the sages advises Iskandar that a temple should be built on the shore with a copper idol carrying a large drum. Acting on advice from the Sage, Iskandar builds the temple with a copper idol. After completion of the temple, the sage advises Iskandar to beat the drum, and as Iskandar starts to beat the drum, the swirling water around the shore recedes and Iskandar is able to continue his journey. The sage explains to Iskandar that fierce sea monsters circle the ships and create the dangerous turbulent currents, causing ships to beak up so that monsters can eat the passengers. But the sound of the drum frightens them away.

Several experts have also attributed this illustration to Bihzad.⁸⁵ Here he has portrayed the sea monster in a form of a dragon,⁸⁶ shown swimming away in the right foreground. It is an action packed scene with a sense of immediacy. All figures are in motion performing different tasks presenting a more realistic depiction than earlier illuminations. An outcrop of rocks on the shore and at the side of the temple in different colors is rendered in typical Bihzad fashion. Iskandar's ship is in the process of lifting its anchor for the departure but at the same time a smaller ship is being pulled away in the wake of the fleeing monster. Iskandar is seen beating the drum in front of the temple that houses the copper idol. Bihzad has created a masterful

illustration that is superbly expressive and fully captures the sprit of the story.

[Illustration 40]
Victory of Iskandar over the Zangi
MS. 36 Fol.218b.

During the night the Zangis⁸⁷ attack Iskandar's camp but they could not break through the magic circle.⁸⁸ Later an angel visits Iskandar with good tidings of victory over the Zangis and at the same time he warns Iskandar against the Turks. After number of battles Alexander manages to defeat the Zangis and they were forced back to their land.⁸⁹

This illustration is a good example of the Shiraz school in mid fifteenth century. Large figures boldly draw, exhibit a sense of fierceness and violence, and effectively demonstrate the chaotic battle scene— the direct antithesis of the academic refinement of the illuminations of the Herat school produced contemporaneously for Baysunghur.

The illumination has a gold background with a blue sky dotted with dramatic swirls of large gray clouds and small gold clouds. The entire scene conveys action and drama with horses shown at full gallop adorned in battle armor. Dramatic violent movements are illustrated with Iskandar, in the foreground astride a galloping horse holding the reins in his left hand, clubbing a Zangi with his right hand while one of his men in the background has just shot an enemy with an arrow. It is a dramatic illumination that eloquently portrays the violence and the fierceness of battle.

[Illustration 41]
Iskandar and the Sirens
Cat. 38 Fol.484a.

This illustration represents the poetic painting style of the Herat school around the 1430s under Shah Rukh. Artists were more interested in the visualization of narrative than the portrayal of the physical world. Illuminations exhibit a uniform typology of figures and the environment, yet they excel in harmony and balance, beautiful draftsmanship, luminous colors, and precision of design. Idealized and fairytale characteristics of the scenes are created by suppressing the naturalism along with disregard for spatial perspective, and three-dimensionality.

It is a beautiful fairytale scene where Iskandar is peeping through rocks watching the sirens bathe. In an idealized pool naked sirens are frolicking while one siren is standing at the edge of the pool guarding them. The background contains an outcrop of colorful rocks through which Iskandar and his companion's heads are visible peering at the sirens. The scene illustrates the exact moment when a siren who is keeping a watchful eye becomes aware of the intruders, and gives signal to other sirens by holding up a stem of leaves and berries, while the other sirens in the pool try to cover up their nakedness turning their backs to the intruders. The guarding siren's figure at the edge of the water is visible while the others are half submerged in the water. She has beautiful long flowing hair with little flames at her elbows to indicate she is a siren, and she wears a skirt of leaves. It is an idealized playful setting painted in luminous color representative of the Herat school of the period.

[Illustration 42]
Battle Between Iskandar and Dara
ADD. 25900 Fol.231v.

This is one of the last Timurid dynasty illuminations by Bihzad in the Herat school,⁹⁰ subsequent illustrations by Bihzad are all in early Safavid period. Bihzad has created a brilliant battle scene between Iskandar and Dara (Darius). He has staged a theatrical scene full of high drama, dynamism and naturalism.⁹¹ It is a carefully choreographed representation that exhibits balance, fluid actions of people and graceful movements of horses. The illumination reveals Bihzad's intensely accurate study of horses and humans. He has drawn horses in many different positions such as profile, front or back view, full gallop, rearing back with their heads turned, bending forward, tilting back and much more. Each human figure represents a unique personality; they are well proportioned, naturally portrayed in the fierce battle. The well balanced composition, luminous color palette, and fine details are the hallmark of Bihzad's style and his signature *Suvvarahu al-abd Bihzad* (painted by the slave Bihzad) appears between the columns of the text at top left.

ILLUSTRATIONS: THE SHAHNAMA⁹²

[Illustration 43]
Nushaba Recognizing Iskandar Who is Disguised as a Merchant
MS.1437 Fol.323a.

The story of Iskandar in this illumination is almost the same as the story in the *Khamasa*, [Illustration 35] *Iskandar Inspects His Own Portrait* but the iconography of the illuminations is different. In this episode Iskandar is disguised as a merchant (instead of as his own envoy as portrayed in the

Khamisa) who visits Nushaba, the Queen of Barda. Queen Nushaba recognizes Iskandar but she is frustrated by the repeated denials of his own identity. The artist of this illumination has picked a different incident in the story to illustrate the same anecdote.

This illumination illustrates an indoor scene where Iskandar, framed against vibrant blue tiles, wearing a white turban, (the headdress of royalty at that time) and a royal red gown is accompanied by two of his attendants. Iskandar has typical Mongol features with almond eyes, a droopy moustache and a pointed beard. When portraying architecture, artists naturally turned to their own environment, depicting contemporary buildings and their decoration, and began translating three-dimensional forms into a two-dimensional surface on the paper.⁹³ Thus the depiction of the interior and its decorations, such as the tile designs of both the floors and the walls, represents the typical Timurid interior design. These tile designs, produced in *kitabkhana*, were also used on their monuments such as the *madrasa* of Gawharshad in Herat, c. 1432, *Aq Saray*, *Shahr-I Sabz*, c. 1379-96, and Shrine of Abdullah Ansari, Gazargh, c. 1425-29 [Illustration 9]. A large window with a black grill in the center of the illumination draws our eye inwards, then our focus wanders to the luxurious scalloped red curtain that frames the upper border of the illustration. Queen Nushaba is sitting on a carpet cushion.

[Illustration 44]
Alexander Comforting Dying Dara
MS. 239 Fol.313b.

Dara, the celebrated king of Persia, led his army to defeat Iskandar near the river Euphrates. After a week of fierce fighting Dara was forced to flee and Iskandar triumphantly marched to Persepolis,⁹⁴ the capital city of the Achaemenid Empire. Since Dara was on the run, the two trusted ministers of Dara, one priest named Mahyar and another treasurer named Janusiyar decided to assassinate the mighty king hoping for a big reward from Iskandar for their deed. These two men approached Dara at night and Janusiyar thrust a dagger into Dara's chest wounding him fatally.

The two greedy assassins inform Iskandar of their deeds in exchange for a big reward and lead Iskandar to Dara. With tears in his eyes Iskandar kneels beside the wounded king gazing at his face, gently holding his head on his lap. He beseeches Dara to rise and mount his horse so he can take him to the camp and summon the best physicians from India and Rum to take care of his wounds. He tells Dara he will take revenge and tears of blood will flow for the pain he (Dara) has suffered. He (Alexander) will restore his (Dara's) kingdom and surrender the throne back to him (Dara) when he recover and Alexander also promises Dara that he will immediately "... hang head downwards on the gallows ..."⁹⁵ the two assassins. He further tells Dara that he was totally grief stricken when he was informed the day before by his elders that they share the same lineage and they both have the same father, therefore, he will not shed blood in rivalry.

Saddened, Iskandar comforts the dying Dara and urges him to speak. Dara asks, "See to my children and my kinsfolk and my beloved ones whose faces are veiled. Marry my pure-bodied daughter and maintain her in security in your palace. . . ." ⁹⁶ [Illustration 44A] ⁹⁷ Her named is Rowshanak (Roxanne) and analogous to her name she has brought joy and adornment into this world. Dara further asks Iskandar to restore the glory and rebuild his empire with a noble son conceived by Rowshanak and him (Iskandar) that will bring luster to the fire of Zardosht (Zohrastrian), and their faith will once again flourish and prosper. As promised to his brother Dara, Iskandar hangs both Dara's ministers at once with their heads hung downwards on the gallows. ⁹⁸

This Manuscript made for Mohammed Juki is one of the finest surviving *Shahnama* in the collection of the Royal Asiatic Society, London. ⁹⁹ Historically it was made at the halfway point between the peak of the classical style of Baysunghur's *kitabkhana* and the rise of the innovative and more humanistic style of Bihzad. Some of the background's iconographic elements are borrowed from the Il-Kkanid, in the portrayal of the trees, clouds and the stylized contours of hills. Iskandar is seated cradling Dara's head in his lap in the foreground, his head bent, looking distraught; helplessly watching the wounded Dara's blood oozing out of his chest. In the middle of the illumination two of Iskandar's men on horses, half concealed by the contours of the hills guard the surrounding area followed by the two assassins. They are easily distinguishable as they are the only two figures dressed in white, without any battle gear or helmets among the retinue of

soldiers who are attired in full armor and helmets with little red pennons, carrying banners, swords, bows and arrows.

It is a beautifully choreographed scene with skillfully placed varied elements that helps our vision move gracefully from one character to the next. First our eyes rest on Iskandar and Dara then we follow the two horsemen and the two assassins, as our eyes curve back to the group of soldiers on the horizon, who are again half concealed by the hills in front as well as in the back. The azure sky makes a beautiful contrast with the golden hills that are delineated with tufts of grass and trees. It is a perfect representation of the post-Baysunghur *kitabkhana* style of the Herat, according to Robinson.¹⁰⁰ The illustration has the crisp perfection of technique, brilliant color palette, sense of rhythm and balance emphasizing the Herat School philosophy.

[Illustration 45]

***Alexander Comforting Dying Dara with the Treacherous
Officers, Janusiyar and Mahiyar Held Prisoners Near By.*
Or. 1403 Fol.313b**

This illumination is painted within a span of five to seven years of the above illumination of Mohammed Juki's *Shahnama*, but is in a different style. Because of the starkness and simplicity of the composition, it has a greater impact than Illustration 44 with its more complex arrangement. The illustration has a high horizon, figures are rather large and stiff but it has a powerful sense of story. The figures exude the might and authority, and much less pathos than the Herat miniatures. The primary focus is on the two main characters of the story, Iskandar and Dara.

Here also Iskandar is seated with his head bent holding Dara's head in his lap intently looking at Dara bleeding, while three of Iskandar's men stand in the background. The figures are stiff and awkward but they have powerful impact on the psyche. Both the rulers are dressed in battle regalia and helmets with red plumes representative of contemporary Timurid gear. The landscape is stark and simple, dotted with tufts of grass and two trees with birds in the background. Illustration 44 shows the refined features of the Herat school, while this illumination represents the early Shiraz school with high horizon, simple compositions and the emphasis on a strong narrative. While the other illustrations have the grace and balance of a ballet performance, this illustration has a sense of theater and drama.

[Illustration 46]

***Alexander Executes Janusiyar and Mahiyar, the Slave of Darius*
40.38.1**

As this title suggests, this miniature illustrates the conclusion of the story in Illustration 44: Iskandar, "hangs head downwards on the gallows"¹⁰¹ of both Dara's ministers. In the foreground Iskandar and his people astride their horses watch the execution of Janusiyar and Mahiyar. They are dressed in local Timurid costumes, and Iskandar is wearing the gold crown of the rulers of that period while his people wear the turbans characteristic of that era. To exhibit honor and respect and to indicate that Iskandar is the important figure, one of his men holds an umbrella above his head, a common custom practiced at that time.¹⁰² Both the assassins of Dara are shown hanging upside down with their feet tied to a crossbeam supported by two

upright posts. They are being tortured with blood dripping from their chests, wrists, heads and cheeks, enduring a slow and painful death.

This *Shahnama* illumination represents the Turkman style, which is the synthesis of both the Herat school and the Shiraz school. The miniature is illustrated around 1480s, and has a high horizon, tufts of grass with bushes scattered around, high hill with decorative edges, and swirls of clouds. These characteristics are typical of the Shiraz school. It still has a strong narrative quality but now human figures are not stiff or large; instead of being stubby they are slimmer and more elongated, with an outline of the body underneath the clothes. This refinement is borrowed from the Herat school. The composition is no longer simple but now it begins to get a more complex. Overall it is a very effective illustration, truly representing the pure essence of the narrative.

[Illustration 47]
Alexander the Great Slaying a Dragon
M. 847.

A standard theme of the *Shahnama*, this incident generally depicts Bahram Gur, the courageous Persian hero known for his might and bravery. Iskandar, embraced as a Persian king and as a courageous hero in this great epic, is also awarded with legendary strength and valor, and shown slaying a fierce dragon.

By the mid-fifteenth century the Herat school was influenced by the *Chinoiserie* leitmotifs and this is typical of the assimilated orientalism of Persian illumination in Timurid art. The dragon depicted in this illustration is a variation of Il-khanid dragons that were derived from the Chinese

sources and this form is repeated throughout the Islamic world after the Mongol invasion.¹⁰³ The artist has created a dramatic theatrical scene with a ferocious dragon attacking Iskandar who is slaying the dragon astride his horse while the onlookers watch Iskandar from behind the hill in awe. Rocky hill contours dotted with tiny tufts of grass and flower-rock patches, exhibit some Chinese attributes¹⁰⁴ are typical of the Herat school of the mid-fifteenth century, which suggests that this *Shahnama* may have been illustrated during Baysunghur's reign. The figures of the spectators are graceful, some with their heads tilted, full of gestures expressing varied emotions unlike the earlier stiff and stubby figures of the early fifteenth century.

There are numerous illuminations depicting the subject of the *slaying dragon* in varied Persian manuscripts.¹⁰⁵ This popular subject is painted by Bihzad several times and the illustrations are almost identical with minor changes in the scenery.¹⁰⁶

[Illustrations 48A, 48B & 48C]
Iskandar at the Wall of the Land of Juj and Majuj
(Gog and Magog)
Or.1403 Fol.329a, H.796 Fol.101b & Or.1403 Fol.442b.

Alexander is said to have had many adventures in the course of his travels. In this story, Alexander approaches the edge of the civilization, beyond which, it is believed, lay a strange land. The inhabitants of this strange place called Gog and Magog are monster-like creatures with faces resembling camels, black tongues, eyes the color of blood, and teeth that look like wild boar tusks. Their bodies are covered with bristles, their chests, and ears are similar to that of the elephants, therefore, when they go to sleep one

ear forms their bed while other ear makes a covering like a blanket. They multiply rapidly and each spring they roar like lions, charging down the mountains like boars, and when the weather turns cold they become thin and feeble, repeating this cycle year after year.¹⁰⁷

The local citizens request Alexander to protect them from these savage monsters. Alexander inspects the mountains accompanied by his philosophers and builds two colossal walls each a hundred *ells* thick between the two mountains up to the summit. These walls are made of carbon, iron, and copper, enameled together with sulfur. When the task is completed Iskandar asks for naphtha, oil and charcoal to be poured and gives orders to set it alight. The blazing inferno reaches the sky eradicating the strange monsters, thus liberating the local inhabitants from the Juj and Majuj.

This is a favorite episode of the *Shahnama* and it is repeatedly illustrated. Each illumination is unique and represents an artist's or patron's taste. The British library illustration 48 A (Or.1403 Fol.329a)¹⁰⁸ is simple and quaint, a strip of rectangle panel reveals a simple wall drawn as a wide diagonal separating the people of Gog and Magog from Iskandar and the local citizens. The illumination of the same subject at the Topkapy Surayi in Istanbul is more complex with Iskandar in the foreground observing the wall being completed, and the people of Gog and Magog in the background separated by the nearly constructed wall [Illustration 48B].¹⁰⁹ The treatment of the third illumination in the India Office Library is very different. It gives the reverse vantage-point with people of Gog and Magog

shown in the foreground with Iskandar looking down from above, watching the battlement of the wall against the sky [Illustration 48C].¹¹⁰

Another version of Firdausi's elaborate recounting of this story is in the Paris Veer Collection. The artists have taken up the challenge of illustrating this story with Alexander supervising the construction. Workmen from all over the world, represented by different costumes and headgear have joined Alexander to build this colossal wall. They are equipped with various tools and working with molten metal, or lifting large stones for the construction while the grotesque creatures from Gog and Magog peer from behind the hills.¹¹¹

Iskandar Visits A Hermit
MS 239 Fol.278r.

This illumination was also painted by Bihzad, as was the *Khamisa* illumination 37, of the same title. Both the illuminations have many common elements especially the architecture. On the horizon the castle looks quite impregnable, jagged angular walls are embellished with beautifully designed borders created out of tiles and superb patterns on the solid walls are created with colored bricks. Square, hexagonal as well as round shaped buildings juxtaposed against each other create an interesting visual delight. Mohammed Juki's name is inscribed in decorative *kufic* script above the doorway of the fort in this *Shahnama* illumination. The expressive qualities with highly refined painting style, harmonious coloring, and natural and humanized figures are the hallmarks of Bihzad.

The tradition of borrowing architecture, landscape and human groupings or repetition of the compositions were commonly practiced by most artists and it produced uniformity in their visual presentations. In this instance, the artist of both the illuminations is Bihzad, but in many instances artists copy the designs from other artists. This practice was common in the fifteenth century. The art of copying from their predecessors was not considered plagiarism, rather it was an honor for the artist whose forms were copied.

[Illustrations 49A & 49B]

Khadir Drinking From Water of Life Watched By Iskandar
Or. 1403 Fol. 328a & 328r.

In one of his travels Iskandar reaches a place where there was an abundance of gardens, palaces, mansions, and open spaces. He stands near a stream at dusk, watching the sun disappear from the azure water, then he returns to his encampment with profound thoughts of the ancient legend that talked about the Water of Life and the name of Allah on his mind. He searches the area for a person who is familiar with this legend and finds a *Khadir* (prophet) who will take him to the source of the Water of Life.

The *Khadir* informs Iskandar that the Water of Life contains immortality to whoever drinks it but that person must surrender himself and his services to God for eternity. The *Khadir* tells Iskandar that he possesses two rings that will shine like a sun at the sight of the Water of life. Iskandar and the *Khadir* set out to find this magic water, and after two days and two nights, two paths appear in the darkness separating them from each other. The *Khadir* proceeds forward and finds the Stream of Life, where he

submerges his body in its pure water, drinks it and returns with loud praise for the Creator.

This is an uncomplicated illumination showing the Khadir in a yellow gown drinking the Water of Life while Iskandar on the other side of the pond (at a very far distance, though not made clear in the illustration) watches the Khadir. There is no perspective, all the elements are flat, the pond is represented by a simple circle yet the illumination has the freshness and naivete of a child's imagination.

**[Illustrations 50A & 50B]
Iskandar Killing Fur in Battle
Or. 1403 Fol. 320a & Add. 18188 Fol. 317b.**

One of the most favorite and popular genres for the artist was to illustrate battle scenes. The courage and valor of the protagonist illustrated in the miniatures elevates the hero's status and gives him an aura of invincibility. Although in the *Shahnama* and the *Khamisa* manuscripts, the heroes illustrated have been dead for hundreds or thousands of years, the portrayal of their heroic deeds directly and indirectly elevated the Timurid ruler's status.

The illustration Or. 1403 Fol.320a [Illustration 50A] is an earlier illustration painted in 1437. The style of this miniature points to the early Shiraz school because the miniature has a simple composition with a high horizon, and a stark semicircular hill with no bushes or trees except for tufts of grass. The edges of the hills are shown with a decorative border. Various elements such as human figures and animals are flat with no attempt to show mass or volume. Iskandar is at the point where he has just decapitated

the Fur (Porus, king of India) with his sword; the head falls forward with blood gushing out of his neck like a water fountain, defying the laws of gravity while men watch this drama from behind the hills. In spite of numerous technical inaccuracies the illustration projects dynamic energy as well as a sense of drama and is very successful in the illustration of the powerful narrative. This theatrical illustration involves the spectator as an active participant in its experience.

The illustration Add.18188 Fol.317b [Illustration 50B] also shows Iskandar killing the Fur painted in the Turkman style fifty years later (1486). The artist seems to have derived the basic framework of the illustration from the earlier illustration Or. 1403 Fol.320a but now he has added numerous refinements. The illustration still has a high horizon line with semicircular hills, but now flower bushes, a set of trees and a grouping of rocks are added to the panorama softening the starkness of the earlier landscape. The human figures have more mass and volume but horses are almost drawn identically to the earlier models. Both Iskandar's and Fur's men watch the event from behind the hills; they do not look rigid or static but have a sense of rhythm and motion with their flags furling in the wind. Overall it is a beautiful illustration with a more intricate composition; it has a sense of rhythm and style, has more technical accuracy, and is more refined, but it has lost the raw energy and sense of drama of the earlier illustration and it is not as successful in the projection of its narrative qualities.

REPETITION OF TOPICS AND ICONOGRAPHY IN THE TIMURID MANUSCRIPTS

The repetition of iconography, as well as subject matter, is an integral feature of Timurid art and of Persian miniature painting in general, and it is well documented.¹¹² At present many art-historians have researched this phenomenon as to why one finds repeated or similar iconography (from the earlier texts) in the royal manuscripts.¹¹³ It clearly demonstrates one of the underlying canons that guided artistic production in the Timurid *kitabkhana* — the standardization of the visual vocabulary. The stylistic homogeneity in iconography is found in the compositional formulas, color palette, images, settings, and proportions of the figures and their relation to the landscape. These images are repeated in varied texts, dates, places of production and patrons. For example, one finds Jalayrid compositions adopted by many Timurid artists. Later Turkman *kitabkhana* borrowed the stylistic compositions of the Jalayrids from the Timurid *kitabkhana* of Shiraz and the Herat, and this borrowing continues.

There are six illustrations out of thirteen that are duplicated from the earlier Timurid manuscript compositions of the *Khamasa*¹¹⁴ produced for Ismat al-Dunya, wife of Mohammed Juki; three of them are based on the compositional formula of Iskandar Sultan's *Anthology*,¹¹⁵ now in the British Library. Another example of two similar compositional formulas is entitled *Iskandar and the Siren*¹¹⁶ one in St. Petersburg, Hermitage State Library, and the other in Lisbon, the Gulbenkian Foundation [Illustrations 41 & 51]. The unusual texture of water with curvilinear edges makes a charming

setting for sirens surrounded by outcroppings of rocks in shades of blues and purples in the background. The sirens radiate a sense of naivete and their charming leaf skirts convey their apparent innocence. Robinson suggests that the artist of the St. Petersburg's *Khamisa*¹¹⁷ knew of the corresponding compositions from the Lisbon *Anthology*.¹¹⁸

Baysunghur's *Anthology*, now in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin,¹¹⁹ contain the illustrations *Iskandar Begegnet dem Kaiser von China* and *Dara Flieht vor Iskandar* are closely related [Illustrations 19 A & 52]. At first glance they look identical; these images so close to same prototype suggest that stencils may have been used. Beside the illustrations, the page schematics (arrangement of text) of both the illustration is almost identical with a triangle placed in the middle of the right edge of a page. In both illustrations [19A & 52], Alexander appears from behind the hills with an umbrella above his head with three soldiers, and in Illustrations 52, three horses' tails and a partial banner is visible with horses' bodies concealed behind the opposite hill. The artist has displayed a quirky sense of humor.¹²⁰ Some derivations of this standardized imagery are also found in two illustrations of a *Zafarnama*¹²¹ painted for Ibrahim Sultan [Illustrations 53 & 54]. All four illustrations have many common elements such as, a simple compositional formula, high horizon line with Iskandar on his horse dressed in battle gear, partly concealed by the hills, and an umbrella above his head.

There are many versions of *Nushaba Recognizing Iskandar*, another favorite topic illustrated with many variations. In the *Khamisa*¹²² illustration [Illustration 35] (Topkapi sarayi) Nushaba confronts Iskandar with his own

portrait. In another miniature of the *Khamasa* in the Hermitage museum, [Illustration 55] illustrates the same story, but in different manner. In both the above, Illustrations 35 & 55, Iskandar is seated on a stool inspecting his own portrait. Another version of this subject is illustrated for the *Shahnama*¹²³ [Illustration 43] (London, British Museum) where Nushaba recognizes Iskandar, but he is not confronted with his portrait. The common elements in Illustration 43 of the *Shahnama* and Illustration 55 of the Hermitage miniature, in contrast to Illustration 35, are that both illustrations have an indoor setting with beautiful Persian tiles on the walls and floor though both Illustrations 43 & 55 have chosen to illustrate different occurrences.

Another illustration, *The Battle of Iskandar and Dara*¹²⁴ painted in the early Safavid period [Illustration 56] has borrowed heavily from the *Khamasa*¹²⁵ illustration now in the British Library [Illustration 42]. Illustration 42 has been attributed to Bihzad and Illustration 56 may as well or more likely by Shaykh-Zadeh Mahmud under Bihzad's supervision at Herat.¹²⁶ Certain sections of the foreground in the center and on the left and two central horsemen in combat are similar to the earlier illustration with minor variation on the helmets and slight alteration in the color palette. Bahari speculates that the artist responsible for this version must have had access to the earlier illustrations or at least the artists may have access to the stencils of the prototypes or pounced copies of them.¹²⁷

The Timurid *kitabkhana* had a definite aesthetic program with a clear understanding of the principle of miniature paintings along with the

convention regarding the treatment of earlier prototype models. Adamova suggests that the artist sometimes chose to copy certain aspects of the previous illustration because it illustrated the artist's proficiency by repeating the same models with varying degree of exactness. Thus the painter can prove that not only does he follow the basic canons of Persian painting but at the same time he pays respect to his predecessors by copying their work. He is thus worthy of comparison with earlier masters and his skill is equal to theirs. She further elaborates that the artist contrived new compositions from older models adhering to the basic principles of Persian painting at the same time exhibiting his innovative talents.¹²⁸

One can hypothesize the reasons for finding repeated iconography in varied manuscripts from different dates and areas. One of the reasons for this occurrence could be because of the constant changes in the political environment. Artists moved from one court to another, and it was a common practice of the *kitabkhana* for artists to derive many of their images from existing albums that contained prototypes, or from extant stencils. Our contemporary attitude towards copying is very different from the earlier phenomenon. The Persian artist did not consider copying or repeating of iconography as acts of plagiarism, or he did not practice this method to simplify or expedite his work. Copying became an act of bestowing respect for the artist whose iconography he had copied.

The tradition of repetition of topics and iconography in the Timurid manuscript is an enormous and important aspect of Timurid art. It is

impossible to cover all the aspects of it in its entirety in this chapter. Only a few examples have been given to illustrate several basic points.

ANALYSIS: BURGUNDIAN AND TIMURID MINIATURE ILLUSTRATIONS

As illustrated above, the Timurid *kitabkhana* was responsible for the cultivation of the aesthetic vision for the ruling sultans and they illustrated numerous volumes depicting the themes from two of their favorite epics, the *Shahnama* and the *Khamasa*. The exploits of Alexander are part legend and part historical. These miniatures illustrating the battles of Alexander, or tales of moral and spiritual significance drawn from these epics, take place in an ordinary profane world but transport them to non-temporal significance. Some stories are based on historical facts, but a majority of these themes are based on the chimera of Alexander and his fantastic deeds, unlike the Burgundian manuscripts of that era.

The Burgundian manuscripts illustrate historical themes derived from the ancient authors. These manuscripts portray the heroic and chivalrous deeds of Alexander yet at the same time they also depict the frailty and weakness of his nature. The Burgundian manuscripts developed a new reality based imagery imbedded with historical narratives bereft of Christian ideology and lacking the workings of divine manifestations¹²⁹ whereas Timurid imagery is steeped in the religious ideology and full of revelations and supernatural phenomenon.

Burgundian illuminations emphasized a realistic school of painting that included direct visual observation, portrayals of realistic scenery,

natural landscape, and a sense of perspective. The human figures are drawn anatomically correct and the careful modeling gives an aura of three-dimensionality. Burgundian illuminations are also very complex, full of symbolism, and have many layers of hidden messages that emphasize the greatness of Alexander.

Timurid illuminations illustrate architecture as a series of patterned and decorative planes to convey the features of a contemporary building unlike the Burgundian illustrations which portray authentic contemporary architecture. The complex assemblage of overlapping planes and surfaces on a flat page of a Timurid illustration create the illusion of a building inside a picture frame. The architecture gained more prominence, and unique compositions were created because of the juxtapositions of various elements, as well as the embellishment of walls, domes and floors, with decorative patterns that disregarded the scale and the principle of perspective. These elaborate decorations transformed the architectural elements into shimmering surfaces with jewel-toned colors accented with gold and silver. Despite the absence of perspective as well as the absence of careful molding and shading, Timurid miniatures managed to create an illusion of space and depth on a two-dimensional surface composition.

In the recent past, a few authors such as Y. Burckhardt and S. Nasr have written about intellectual and spiritual dimensions of Islamic art. Nasr especially has tried to show the close relation between Islamic art and spirituality from the point of view of Sufi philosophy.¹³⁰ According to these

authors, Timurid miniatures are clearly categorized by “non three-dimensional” or homogeneous space,¹³¹ and the Sufi theologians would characterize it as natural space relating to another world concerning a higher mode of consciousness. According to Nasr, Persian miniatures adopted the laws of natural perspective, *perspective naturalis*, whose basic laws of geometry were developed by Euclid and later by Muslim geometers and opticians Ibn al-Haytham and Kamal al-Din al-Farsi (representative of the Illustration 38A & 38B).¹³² Fifteenth century Persian miniatures conformed to the realism of an Islamic viewpoint by not making a flat surface of the paper (the two dimensional space) appear three-dimensional by applying the rule of perspective.

Sufi philosophers would propose that the description of gardens and flowers in Persian literature are illustrated in many of the miniatures, whose space and forms have their own standard and perimeter, and depict not only the natural world but also the paradisiacal settings.¹³³ The treatment of space and color reveal the symbolic nature of the classical Persian miniature and its relation to the illusionary or imagined world. The Sufis would further suggest that man and his art are grounded in this world, but simultaneously they are part of the illusion of imagined or metaphysical world, which is understood only by the few intellectual elite. The philosophy of Rumi with respect to the superiority of mystical experience over the acquired knowledge has already been discussed earlier in the illustrations 34 & 35. In his *Mathnawi* he writes about the physical reflection (*nishan*) of the image verses

reflection representing the mystical experience to receive a higher being (Allah) in their heart.¹³⁴

The space in the Persian miniature is the space of that 'imagined world' where the forms of nature, the trees, the flowers, and the birds, as well as the events originate and exist within the human soul. The greatest Persian Sufi poet Jalal al-Din Rumi characterizes this effervescent or imagined world in his verses of *Mathnawi*, as

In the orchard a certain Sufi laid face in Sufi fashion
upon his knee for the sake of (mystical) revelation:
Then he sank deep into himself. An impertinent fellow
was annoyed by his semblance of slumber.
'Why,' said he, 'dost thou sleep? Nay look at the rivers,
behold these trees and the marks (of Divine mercy)
and green plants.
'Harken to the command of God, for He hath said, "Look
ye": Turn thy face towards these marks of (Divine) mercy.'
He replied, 'O Man of vanity, its marks are (within) the heart:
that (which) is without is only the marks of the marks.
'The (real) orchards and verdure are in the very essence
of the soul: the reflection thereof upon (that which is)
without is as (the reflection) in running water,
'In the water there is (only) the phantom (reflected image)
of the orchard, which quivers on account of the subtle
quality of the water.
'The (real) orchards and fruits are within the heart: the reflection
of their beauty is (falling) upon this water and earth
(the external world).
'If it were not the reflection of that delectable cypress, then God
would not have called it the abode of deception.'¹³⁵

According to Nasr, "The function of the genuine Persian miniature, as all sacred and traditional art, is to reflect through symbolism¹³⁶ something of that delectable garden in a world which without this reflection would be mere deception."¹³⁷

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- ¹ The Abbasid dynasty, 750-1258.
- ² The Fatimid dynasty in North Africa and Egypt, 910-1171; The Mamluks in Egypt, 1260-1517.
- ³ Umayyad Prince Abd al-Remnan and his son al-Hakam established a most remarkable kingdom in Spain from 750-1260. Cordoba was the wealthiest and most brilliant city in the medieval world and Islamic Spain was the single most powerful cultural center of Europe.
- ⁴ Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles: The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1989), 159-230.
- ⁵ Richard Ettinghausen and Oleg Grabar, *The Art and Architecture of Islam 650-1250* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 167-86.
- ⁶ Barbara Brend, *Islamic Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 63.
- ⁷ Robert Gardner prod. & dir., *Islam, Empire of Faith* (Public Broadcasting Service, 2001), Videocassette no. B 8511.
- ⁸ Some of these *kitabkhanas* were huge complexes with domed buildings surrounded by lakes and gardens. The huge vaulted rooms housed manuscripts in decorative cabinets. They were catalogued and maintained by a director, librarians and curators. Some were attached to a *madrassa* and profoundly influenced the cultural development of the dynasties.
- ⁹ Johannes Pedersen, *The Arabic Book*, trans. Geoffrey French (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 123-24.
- ¹⁰ The enormous tomb complex in Tabriz that housed a manuscript repository and a small staff.
- ¹¹ Iraj Afshar & M. Minovi, intro. *Waqf-nama-yi Rab-I Rashidi: Intisharat-I Anjuman-I Athar-I Mille* (1972), 87.
- ¹² Lentz and Lowry, 50-51.
- ¹³ Ibid., 50-56, 114-15.
- ¹⁴ Timur was accompanied by Uighur and other secretaries who recorded all his actions and these writing became the official court chronicles that were copied in his *kitabkhana*. These chronicles provided the basis for many historical books that were produced for Timur, such as *The Shahnama*, presumably at Shiraz, 1370-71. as well as collections of *The Khamsa*, and others—*Futuhāt-i Miranhashi* (The conquest of Miranhashi), *Roznama-i futuhāt-i Hindustani* (Journal of Indian conquest), *Zafarnama* (the Book of Conquest), *Tarikh-i Khani* (Il-Khanid History), etc.
- The Timurid prince Shah Rukh possessed the Mongol manuscript *jami al-tawarikh* of Rashiduddin which had a major impact on the creation of a historical idiom of paintings in both the *Shahnama* and the *Iskandarnama* at Timurid courts at Herat and Shiraz.
- ¹⁵ *Shahnama*, copied in Iran, mid fourteenth century. 20 x 29 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, The Cleveland Museum of Art, Grace Rainey Rogers Fund, MS.43.658; and *Shahnama*, Shiraz, 1371. 11 x 17 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, MS.H.1511, f.276a.
- ¹⁶ *A Prince Killing a Serpent. Khamsa* of Nizami, copied in Iran, ca. 1400. 62 x 35.5 cm. Opaque watercolor, and gold on paper, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, MS. H2152, f.55b; *A Prince Killing a Lion. Khamsa* of Nizami, copied in Iran, ca. 1400. 48 x 33.5 cm. Opaque watercolor, and gold on paper, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, MS. H2152, f.73a.
- ¹⁷ Lentz and Lowry, 50-55.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 50-55, 159-232.
- ¹⁹ Sultan Ahmed's daughter was married to Iskandar Sultan, who had been appointed governor of Shiraz by his uncle, Shah Rukh.

- ²⁰ B. W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the India Office Library* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1976), 13.
- ²¹ In the early-Fifteenth century the *kitabkhana* at Herat produced some of the finest works. Timur had brought artists from the Jalayrid dynasty at Baghdad to Samarqand, now these artists were moved to Herat, bringing with them new vitality and technical expertise in implementing royal ideologies in their works at the Herat *kitabkhana*. The *Khamasa* of Nizami, for Shah Rukh represents the mastery of the Sultan Ahmad Jalayrid's artists, with elegant calligraphic lines along with lyrical execution and the codification of compositions. Thomas Lentz, Jr. "Painting at Herat under Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh" Ph.D diss. (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1985), 121-34.
- Khamasa* of Nizami, for Shah Rukh, Herat, 1431. copied by Mahmud St. Petersburg, Hermitage, VR-1000; *Khamasa*, Herat, 1438. Istanbul, Turk ve Islam Eserleri Musesi, MS. f. 60a.
- ²² *Humay Recognizes Humayun After Their Battle. Diwan* of Khawju Kirmani, for Sultan Ahmad, Baghdad, 1396. copied by Mir Ali ibn Ilyas al-Tabrizi, 32 x 24 cm. London, British Library, Add.18113 f.23a.
- ²³ Brend, 140-42.
- ²⁴ Lentz and Lowry, 50-64, 159-232.
- ²⁵ *Khamasa* of Nizami, copied for Iskandar ibn Umar-Shaykh, Shiraz, 1410-11. London, British Library, Add.27261.
- ²⁶ *Shahnama*, copied for Ibrahim-Sultan ibn Shah Rukh, Shiraz, ca. 1435. copied by Nasr al-Sultani, Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 469 folios with 47 illustrations, five gold tinted drawings, Oxford, Bodleian Library, cat. 58, MS. Ouseley, Add.176.
- ²⁷ Brend, 138-47.
- ²⁸ Yuri Petrosyan et al., with essay by Marie Lukens Swietochowski, *Pages of Perfection: Islamic Paintings and Calligraphy from the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg* (St. Petersburg: ARCH Foundation, Electa, 1995), 61-63.
- ²⁹ After Timur, all his successors continued to support the *kitabkhana*. In fact, under seven royal princes and princesses — Shah Rukh (1377-1447) at Herat, Gawharshad (d. 1457) at Samarqand, Baysunghur (1397-1434) at Herat, Iskandar Sultan (1384-1415) at Shiraz, Ibrahim-Sultan (1394-1435) in Fars and Shiraz, Ulugh-Beg at Samarqand, and Mohammed Juki (1402-44) at Herat, *kitabkhana* flourished and prospered.
- ³⁰ Edward Sokol, *Tamerlane* (Lawrence: Coronado Press, 1977), 230-38.
- ³¹ He was the governor of Shiraz at the beginning of Timurid Period.
- ³² Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny eds. *Timurid Art and culture* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 116.
- ³³ B. W. Robinson, *Persian Painting, in the John Rylands Library* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet Publication, 1980), 35-36.
- Victory of Iskandar Over Zangi. Khamasa* of Nizami, Shiraz, 1444-45. Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS. 36 Fol.218b.
- ³⁴ From the last decade of the fourteenth century to 1503.
- ³⁵ *Shahnama*, Copied for Ibrahim-Sultan ibn Shah Rukh, Shiraz, ca. 1435. copied by Nasr al-Sultani, Opaque, Watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 469 folios with 47 illustrations, five gold tinted drawings, Oxford, Bodleian Library, cat. 58, MS. Ouseley, Add.176.
- ³⁶ *Aja ib al-Makhluqat. Qazwini*, Shiraz, ca. 1440. Manchester, John Rylands Library.
- ³⁷ *Shahnama*, Copied for Ibrahim-Sultan ibn Shah Rukh, Shiraz, ca. 1435. copied by Nasr al-Sultani, Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 469 folios with 47 illustrations, five gold tinted drawings, Oxford, Bodleian Library, cat. 58, MS. Ouseley, Add.176.

- ³⁸ *Shahnama*, Shiraz, 1444. copied by Muhammad al-Sultani, 37.5 x 27.5 cm. Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, Sup.Pers. 494.
- ³⁹ Cleveland, 45.169-56.10.
- ⁴⁰ Gray, 99.
- ⁴¹ The Yazd school is closely related to The Shiraz school because both the *kitabkhana* were under the supervision of Iskandar Sultan, who was the governor of Shiraz as well as of Yazd.
- ⁴² *Iskandar's wall Against Gog and Magog. Shahnama*, London, British library, Or.1403 Fol.329a.
- ⁴³ Petrosyan, 60-63, 93-99.
- ⁴⁴ From the collection of Oriental Institute, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Cat. 58, MS. Ouseley, Add.176.
- ⁴⁵ The dynamic force of Ibrahim Sultan lasted quite a few years after his death, and his influences continued to remain in the Shiraz *kitabkhana* for a very long time. Petrosyan, 93-4.
- ⁴⁶ 1452-1510.
- ⁴⁷ Jafar al-Tabrizi al-Baysunghuri, the inventor of the *Nastaliq* script was head of the Herat *kitabkhana*. The few examples of the large volume of manuscripts that were produced in the Herat *kitabkhana*—*Khushru and Shirin*. by Nizami, 1421; *Nasaih-i Iskandar*. by Nizami, 1425; *Gulistan*. by Sadi Bustan, 1426-2; *Khalila u Dimna*. of Abu al-Maali Nasr Allah, 1431; *Tarikh-i Isfhani*. by Hamza, 1431; *Lamaat of Iraqi. an Anthology* 1431-32; *Laila u Majnu*. by Nizami, 1431-32; numerous *Shahnama* by Firdawsi; and numerous *Khamasa* by Nizami; along with many volumes of poetry and religious literature.
- ⁴⁸ Shah Rukh and later Baysunghur established Herat as their capital and center for political affairs.
- ⁴⁹ Tabriz, Isfahan, Shiraz, Yazd, Bukhara, Samarqand.
- ⁵⁰ *Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh Seated in a Garden. Khalia u Dimna*, for Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh, Herat, 1429. Copied by Shamsuddin Baysunghuri, 28.7 x 19.7 cm. 146 folios with 25 paintings, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, R.1022 Fol.2a.
- ⁵¹ Beside Bihzad, other talented artisans in Sultan Husain's Herat *Kitabkhana* were the calligrapher Sultan Ali al-Mashhadi and poet Jami to name a few. Petrosyan, 96; Brend, 145; and *Princely Patrons: Three Royal Manuscripts of the Timurid Dynasty* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995), 1-3.
- ⁵² *Khamasa of Nizami*, copied for Shah Rukh, Herat, December 1431. copied by Mahmud, Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 502 folios with 38 illustrations, St. Petersburg, State Hermitage, VR-1000.
- ⁵³ Brend, 142-46.
- ⁵⁴ *The Palace of Khawarnaq. Khamasa of Nizami*, for Shah Rukh, Herat, December 1431. copied by Mahmud, Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 502 folios with 38 illustrations, St. Petersburg, State Hermitage, VR-1000, f.251a.
- ⁵⁵ Petrosyan, 209.
- ⁵⁶ Diez album f. 73.S.70, #4; Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library.
- ⁵⁷ Lentz & Lowry, 219.
- ⁵⁸ Quintus Curtius Rufus, Trogus/Justin, and Orosius.
- ⁵⁹ Which retained historical facts but also, gave a marvelous multifaceted dimension to Alexander's persona.
- ⁶⁰ Where historical truth was almost obliterated and was replaced by wonderful adventures of Alexander. Between the 9th and 15th century, the authors of the Persian and Arabic Alexander Romances inserted their own exotic versions to Alexander Romances. These stories of Alexander were more like fairytales and not grounded in historical facts. Some

names and places are recognizable from the historical point of view but others exist only in the realms of legends and fantasy. This category of Alexander Romances is designated by Reuben Levy and Southgate as the Fabulous Romances.

Reuben Levy trans. *The Epic of the Kings: Shāh-nāma, the National Epic of Persia*, by Firdawsi (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 243.

⁶¹ *Shahnama*, Herat, ca. 1425-50. 26.3 x 17.5 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, Two folios, most pages are dispersed, Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, M.66A-B; *Shahnama*, Hertat, ca. Fifteenth century. Dispersed leaf at J. Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 847.

⁶² *Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh Hunting. Shahnama*, Double frontispiece for Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh, Herat, 1430. 38 x 26 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, No.61.

⁶³ Petrosyan, 96-97.

⁶⁴ Ebadollah Bahari, *Bihzad Master of Persian Painting* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996), 8-9; and B. W. Robinson, *Persian Paintings in the John Rylands Library*, 116-17.

Iskandar Visiting the Hermit. Khamasa of Nizami, London, British Library, Or.6810 Fol.273a.

⁶⁵ B. W. Robinson, *Persian Painting, the John Rylands Library*, 89.

⁶⁶ *Khamasa of Nizami*, ca. 1450s. Turkman style, Berlin, Pertsch 719.

⁶⁷ *Shahnama*, prepared for Hakim, ca.1450s. Turkman style, Paris, Stchoukine MT. *Les Peintures des Manuscrits Timurides*, (pl. xxxiv, xxxv).

⁶⁸ Lentz & Lowry, 304.

⁶⁹ *Birth of Alexander. Khamasa of Nizami*, London, The Indian Office Library, MS.387 Fol.306b.

⁷⁰ See chart 6.

⁷¹ There are many interpretations of this complicated painting. Poets Jalal al Din Rumi (1207-1273) in *Mathnavi-yi Manavi* and Ghazali (1058-1111) in *Ihya ulum al-din* suggest that this painting illustrates the superiority of mystical experience over acquired knowledge.

⁷² Richard Ettinghausen ed., *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of art, 1972), 12-15.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 65.

⁷⁶ Ettinghausen, 15.

⁷⁷ Minoo Southgate, *Iskandarnama A Persian Medieval Alexander-Romance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 9-15.

⁷⁸ Other Turkman miniatures that also have the figures with curvaceous lines— *Khushraw entertained*. ca. 1505; *Shrin leaves her maids*. ca. 1505; *Iskandar and the birds*. ca. 1505. London, India office library.

⁷⁹ See Chapter IVA, Plate 2.

⁸⁰ Burgundian Manuscripts illustrated contemporary costumes, worn by the people and royalty of the fourteenth century and Timurid manuscripts also represented the contemporary costumes of the fourteenth-century, worn in Timurid court.

⁸¹ Norah Titley, *Catalog of Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts* (London: British Library, 1977), n.pag.; and Bahari, 140-55.

⁸² It was a common practice of the Sultans to have these types of *majlis* (gatherings) where these sages discussed not only the religious matters but they also discussed many other profound subjects.

- ⁸³ *Kitabkhanas* were responsible for creating designs for the carpets and tiles and sometimes the same designs were also incorporated in the marginalia.
- ⁸⁴ Bahari, 153.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid., 153-55.
- ⁸⁶ Portrayal of the dragon in place of a monster is a direct influence of Chinese art and culture.
- ⁸⁷ Zangis were cannibals who lived in the land of Giants and were a great nuisance to mankind.
- ⁸⁸ A conjuror's or sorcerer's circle, drawn on the ground.
- ⁸⁹ Southgate, 75,119.
- ⁹⁰ The last Timurid ruler was Sultan Husain Baikara, he died in 1506 and at the same time, Herat was captured by Uzbek Shaybani, Shaybak Khan, who ruled until 1510. Bihzad did not produce any significant work during Shaybak's rule. The Safavid Shah Ismail defeated Shaybak in 1510. Shah Ismail appointed Bihzad as head of his kitabkhana that sparked the artistic revival in Herat,
- ⁹¹ A very different style from the Shiraz school or the early Herat school.
- ⁹² See chart 6.
- ⁹³ Michele de Angelis & Thomas Lentz, *Architecture in Islamic Painting* (Cambridge: The Fogg Art Museum with Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1982), 5-9.
- ⁹⁴ Alexander defeated Darius III in 331 BCE. The ancient historian Cleiarchus from Alexandria suggested that Alexander and his troops accidentally burned the royal palace during a wild banquet in celebration of their victory over the Persians. Others have suggested that it is more probable that Alexander may have deliberately destroyed it. Marilyn Stokstad, *Art History* (New York: Prentice Hall Inc., 1999), 86.
- ⁹⁵ Reuben Levy, *Firdowsi The Epic of the Kings Shahnama* (New York: Mazda Publisher, 1996), 236.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid., 235-37.
- ⁹⁷ *Alexander Weds the Daughter of Darius III. Khamsa of Nizami, Fifteenth century.* 29.2 x 20.3 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 13.228.9 Fol. 209 b.
- ⁹⁸ Southgate, 168-70.
- ⁹⁹ B. W. Robinson, *Persian Art in the collection of the Royal Asiatic Society, London* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1996), 1-5.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1-5, 38.
- ¹⁰¹ Levy, 235-37.
- ¹⁰² Many illuminations of Timur also have an umbrella over his head to indicate he is some one of great importance, and illuminations in *Zafarnama* (History of Timur) Timur is portrayed similarly with the umbrella over his head. [Illustrations 52, 53, & 54]
- ¹⁰³ Brend, 144.
- ¹⁰⁴ These Chinese motifs had become common features in the Timurid manuscripts and are assimilated as part of the Timurid style.
- ¹⁰⁵ Miniature illustrations of Bahram Gur slaying the dragon— *Bahram Slaying the Dragon. Shahnama*, ca. 1330. 20 x 29 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, The Cleveland Museum of art, 43.658; *Prince Killing the Dragon. Shahnama*, ca.1400. 62 x 35.5 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library H.2151 F. 55b; *Prince Killing the Dragon. Khamsa of Nizami, Herat, 1494.* f.157a; and many more.
- ¹⁰⁶ Bahari, 125, 146-47.
- ¹⁰⁷ Levy, 246-48.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Shahnama*, from south province, 1437. 94 miniatures, London, British Library, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or. 1403.

- ¹⁰⁹ *Iskandar Builds the Wall to Dam the Gog and Magog. Poetic Anthology*, Yazd, 1407. 26 x 18 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink and gold on paper, 289 folios with 14 illustrations, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H.796Fol.101b.
- ¹¹⁰ London, India Office Library, Ms 387.Fol.442b.
- ¹¹¹ *Alexander Builds the Iron Rampart. Shahnama*, Paris Veer Collection, MS. VII: 85, Fol. 137r.
- ¹¹² Princely vision, 116.
- ¹¹³ Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny eds. *Timurid Art and Culture* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 67-72.
- ¹¹⁴ *Khamisa* of Nizami, for Ismat al-Dunya, wife of Muhammad-Juki ibn Shah Rukh, Herat, 1445-46. copied by Yusuf al-Jami, 24.1 x 16 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 325 folios with 13 illustrations. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, Cat. 32, H.781.
- ¹¹⁵ *Anthology* for Iskandar Sultan, 1410-11. copied by Muhammad al-Halwai and Nasir al-Katib, 18 x 12.5 cm. 542 folios with 20 illustrations, London, British Library, Add.27261.
- ¹¹⁶ *Iskandar and the Sirens. Khamisa* of Nizami, for Shah Rukh ibn Timur, 1431. copied by Muhammad Taqi, 23.3 x 13.2 cm. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 502 folios with 38 illustrations, St. Petersburg, Hermitage State Library, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000. Fol.484a; and *Iskandar Peeping at the Sirens as They Sport By a Lake. Anthology* of Iskandar Sultan, Shiraz, 1410. 9.25 x 5.75 in. Lisbon, Gulbenkian Foundation.
- ¹¹⁷ *Iskandar and the Sirens*. St. Petersburg, Cat. 38 VR-1000 Fol.484a.
- ¹¹⁸ B. W. Robinson, "Price Baysunghur's Nizami: A Speculation" *Art Orientalis* 2 (1957), 383-91.
- ¹¹⁹ *Iskandar Begegnet dem Kaiser von China. and Dara Flieht vor Iskandar. Anthology*, for Prince Baysunghur 1420. copied by Amir Chusrau Dihlawi, Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Hs. S. 916; Vilkmar Enderlein, *Dei Miniaturen der Berliner Baisongur-Handschrift* (Berlin: Bilderhefte der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, 1991).
- ¹²⁰ B. W. Robinson, *Fifteen Century Painting: Problems and Issues* (New York: New York University Press, 1991), 12-13.
- ¹²¹ *Zafarnama*, History of Timur, produced for Ibrahim Sultan, 1436. Jerusalem, Meyer Memorial Institute for Islamic Art.
- ¹²² *Iskandar Inspects His Own Portrait. Khamisa* of Nizami, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, MS.870 Fol.235b.
- ¹²³ *Nushaba Recognising Iskandar Who is Disguised as Merchant. Shahnama*, London, The British Museum, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, MS.1437 Fol.323a.
- ¹²⁴ *The Battle of Iskandar and Dara. Khamisa* of Nizami, Herat, ca. 1525. attributed to Shaykh-Zadel Mahmud under supervision of Bihzad, 18 x 12 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of art, 13.228.7.
- ¹²⁵ *Battle Between Iskandar and Dara. Khamisa* of Nizami, London, British library, Add. 25900 Fol. 231 v.
- ¹²⁶ Bahari, 208-09.
- ¹²⁷ Ibid.
- ¹²⁸ A. Adamova, "Repetition of Compositions in Manuscripts: The Khamisa of Nizami in Leningrad." In *Timurid Art and Culture*, eds. Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 67-75.
- ¹²⁹ See Chapter IVA, subheading *From Legend to History*,.
- ¹³⁰ There has been extensive research on the descriptive and historical studies of Persian miniatures but not much has been researched about the symbolic and spiritual aspect of Persian miniatures.

¹³¹ Homogeneous space is characterized by the integration of space, but continues to retain the non three dimensional character of the natural space, therefore recapitulation of the space of another world and/or other mode of consciousness.

¹³² Nasr, 177-84.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ This philosophy is discussed in Illustration 35.

¹³⁵ R. A. Nicholson trans., *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'ddin Rumi* (London: n.p., 1930), Vol. iv, 347.

¹³⁶ Part of Rumi's philosophy of reflection is depicted in the miniatures: Illustration 34, *Iskandar Judges the Greek and Chinese Painting*. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library, MS.13.228.3 Fol.322a; and Illustration 35, *Iskandar Inspects His Own Portrait*. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library, MS.870 Fol.235b.

¹³⁷ Nasr, 184.

APPENDIX A

VASCO DA LUCENA'S FRENCH TRANSLATION: *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant*

Interest in the history of Alexander was revived in the late medieval period, and consequently many contemporary scholars in Europe undertook the translation of the history of Alexander as related in old manuscripts of the so-called ancient Vulgate authors. This type of historical literature was intended for the educated French-speaking nobility of northern Europe. These histories were written in a rather heavy verbose and pompous style, and clearly rejected the earlier literary genre belonging to the Pseudo-Callisthenus tradition. Hence, the Portuguese and Burgundian humanist Vasco da Lucena translated the *Historiae Alexandri Magni*, written by Quintus Curtius Rufus in antiquity, into French as *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant*, "The Deeds of Alexander the Great."

Vasco da Lucena was born around 1437 in the dioceses of Coimbra in Portugal and studied at the universities of Lisbon, Cologne, and Paris. He served in numerous capacities under many leaders of the Burgundian court in the Low Countries. Such positions included orator to Margaret of York, cupbearer of Isabel of Portugal, and counselor to both Charles V and Charles the Bold.¹

It is believed that Vasco da Lucena started his translation of *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant* around 1461, and over a period of seven years working on and off, finally completed the translation in 1468. He then deemed it appropriate to dedicate his work to Charles the Bold.² Vasco was among the first scholars who undertook the task of the direct translation of the classical texts of

Alexander. Hence he stood at the forefront in the development of literature promoted by the Burgundian court at that time.

It is not clear how many manuscripts were created from Vasco's writings³ but at present we have records of at least thirty-four in museums and private collections all over Europe.⁴ This new genre of historical book set the precedent for new learning,⁵ but did not totally replace established medieval traditions. However, interest in Vasco's text extended far beyond the Burgundian court. Some of these manuscripts were created in Bruges (Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, fr. 22547) and some in northern France (London, British Museum, Royal Library 15 D IV) as one would expect, but many others were produced as far south as Pont-d'Ain⁶ (Bern, Stadtbibliothek, MS A.25) and in other French provinces (Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, fr. 9738) as well as outside the southern Netherlands (Abbeville, Bibliotheque Municipale, MS 92; Chantilly, Musee Conde, MS 756 (507)).

Like most non-liturgical manuscripts of this time, almost all of these manuscripts were richly illustrated and elaborately decorated for the members of the royal and noble houses. These large lecterns favored the Alexander Romances were written in the local vernacular, and followed the prototypical illustration cycle of the late medieval period. However there were two manuscripts⁷ of Vasco's translation that were not meant for illustration and therefore had none.

Vasco's translation provided a new challenge to artists to create a new iconography of Alexander. Earlier artists had a certain pictorial repertoire relating to Alexander, which illustrated miracles, ascension to heaven, etc.,

connected with the fantastic romances and fairy-tale stories. But now with factual historical documents of Alexander, artists had to invent a new pictorial program that illustrated Alexander as a hero, a king, a ruler of a vast empire, and not a miracle-maker.

These surviving manuscripts⁸ of Vasco have diverse pictorial styles, and varied sequences of illustrations. They also differed in the system of production. Nevertheless, Dr. Ross, a scholar of medieval studies at the Warburg Institute, London, has tried to arrange these manuscripts in three broad picture-cycles.⁹ The first category of manuscripts, according to Ross, contains ten large miniatures with a presentation scene, "Vasco da Lucena, presenting his translation to Charles the Bold," with the first miniature on the opening page corresponding to the opening scene of the book. These manuscripts (see Chart # 1) are as follows:

- 2. Bern, Stadtbibliothek, MS A.25
- 3. Chantilly, Musee Conde, MS 755 (467)
- 7. Copenhagen, Royal Library, Thott 540
- 16. London, B. M., Royal 20 C III
- 23. Paris, B.Nat., fr. 258
- 30. Paris, Arsenal, MS 3687
- 33. Vatican, Regin, lat. 736

However, the first manuscript (Bern, Stadtbibliothek, MS. A.25) only has a presentation frontispiece and no other miniatures.

The second category of manuscripts also has a presentation scene and one large miniature at the beginning of each book depicting a scene from the opening chapter. In addition these manuscripts contain between fifteen to eighteen small column-wide miniatures which illustrate the important events. These manuscripts are as follows:

- 8. Florence, Bib. Laurenziana, Medic. Palat. 155
- 9. Geneva, Bibl. Publique et Universitaire, fr. 76
- 11. Gotha, Landesbib., MS I.II6
- 13. London, B.M., Burney I69
- 14. London, B.M., Royal Library 15 D IV
- 15. London, B.M., Royal Library 17 F I
- 17. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, Ludwig XV 8
- 18. New York, H. P. Kraus, Catalogue No. 95
- 20. Oxford, Bodleian, Laud. Misc. 751
- 21. Paris, Bibl. Nat., fr. 47, 48, 49
- 22. Paris, Bibl. Nat., fr. 257
- 24. Paris, Bibl. Nat., fr. 708, 709, 710, 711
- 25. Paris, Bibl. Nat., fr 6440
- 28. Paris, Bibl. Nat., fr. 20311
- 29. Paris, Bibl. Nat., fr. 22547

There are three manuscripts in the third category that have extensive pictorial-cycles. Beside the large presentation frontispiece and a large miniature at the beginning of each book, they also have one small picture mostly at the beginning of each chapter. These manuscripts are as follows:

- 19. Oxford, Bodleian, Douce 318
- 26. Paris, Bibl. Nat., fr. 9738
- 34. Vienna, Nat. Bib., MS 2566

Finally there are two manuscripts that have no illustrations (4. Chantilly, Musee Conde, MS. 756 (507), and 31. St. Petersburg, Russian National Library, F.p. IV 45). One other manuscript has illustrations but Ross does not have any conclusive information on it (12. Jena, Thuringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MS. N.B.89 & 91).

Vasco's French translation of Curtius's *Historiae* retained its popularity up until the seventeenth century, and his was the only French translation of Curtius until 1614, when N. Seguiet published another in Geneva. Vasco's work was printed for the first time around 1500 by Antoine Verard, Michel Le Noir,

and Jacques le Messier in Paris (Chart # 1), and by 1555 it had been reprinted seven times.¹⁰

Vasco was interested in recapturing the truth concerning antiquity. His translation marks a significant shift from the *fabula* to *historia*, which contributed to the development of secular Western European literature and its culture. He was derisive of the earlier fantastic tales of Alexander (the Pseudo-Callisthenes genre and also the Alexander Romances) that did not have valid historical references. He primarily wanted his translation to reflect “the true history” of Alexander. Therefore he meticulously consulted other sources such as Plutarch’s *Life of Alexander* and many other old Latin manuscripts of antiquity, while he was working on the translation of Curtius’s *Historia*.¹¹ His translation is devoid of clerical dogma as well as miracles and divine interventions, which were prevalent in the Alexander Romances.¹²

In spite of his claim to present “true history,” Vasco could not help but add his own beliefs. Vasco’s translation is full of his humanist interjections and reflects his personal views. Indeed he concurred with Curtius’s view of Alexander, which was not all positive, but over and above he superimposed his Christian values. He admired Alexander for his worldly achievements such as, his might and valor as well as his conquest of vast territories and empires, but condemned Alexander for his human failings. He considered Alexander to be morally flawed, a mass murderer, a drunkard, and a heathen facing the damnation of the creator.

Among Vasco’s various writings, he repeatedly compared Charles with his renowned predecessors from antiquity. He offered Alexander as a paradigm of

what Charles the Bold, a Burgundian leader, could achieve. This was his indirect way of instructing Charles the Bold to heed the lessons of Alexander and steer away from rash actions. He strongly believed that from his writings the Burgundian dukes could learn the lessons taught by Alexander the Great and incorporate them into their administration.

There are many hypotheses as to why Vasco began the translation of his *Historiae*. Among them it is suggested that Isabella of Portugal (mother of Charles the Bold and the wife of Philip the Good) was a great supporter of Vasco and promoted his literary and scholarly works. Furthermore, it is speculated that she may have wanted her son Charles to emulate Alexander's success in the East and imitate these examples in his new crusade.¹³

Vasco's translation enjoyed notoriety with scholars, kings, and dukes, as well as with nobility and the general learned population. One of the reasons Alexander's stories may have been popular was that they gave the Burgundian rulers a motive to establish an independent government in the Low Countries, hence overcoming the dominance of France. And equally important, they gave noblemen reason to indulge in their fantasies of royal battles in far-away lands, especially in the East. This may have helped ease their frustrations concerning the crusades and give hope of "expelling the heathens from the Holy Land."¹⁴

Traditionally these historical books were meant to be read aloud. Special orators read these books to noble owners as well as to urban audiences. Philip the Good employed a personal reader¹⁵ and Charles the Bold never went to bed without listening to a recitation of the history of Alexander. Because these books appealed to such wide audiences, they helped to preserve and promote a

particular view of life that the Burgundian rulers wanted to inculcate. Furthermore, these books perpetuated ideals that were important at that time. These ideals promoted the moral beliefs that were synonymous with the Burgundian dukes' spiritual convictions. In this sense the oral readings of historical literature became akin to the daily readings of the Christian scripture.¹⁶

The Burgundian period indicated an evolution towards the secularization of art. Profane subjects such as Vasco's translation of the *Historiae Alexandri Magni*, into French, *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant*, "The Deeds of Alexander the Great," came to challenge the primacy of religious themes. This new literary genre brought about many significant changes in the social, cultural, and religious attitudes of Burgundians in the late medieval period. These new evolutionary trends (non-liturgical as well as historical literature) gave birth to the Renaissance outlook, where a new freedom of spirit and a new world-awareness overcame the old prejudices of medieval times.

¹ Scot McKendrick, *The History of Alexander the Great* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996), 13-15.

² David John Athole Ross, *Alexander Historiatus: A Guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature 1st ed.* (London: University of London, Trinity Press, 1963), 69.

Further scrutiny of Vasco's preliminary dedication reveals that the translation was not specifically written for Charles, but after its completion Vasco felt that Charles was the most appropriate person for his dedication.

³ McKendrick, 101-03; and Ross, *Alexander Historiatus*, 69-71, Contemporary and later inventories and catalogues suggest that at least forty manuscripts were produced, according to McKendrick.

⁴ Ross, *Alexander Historiatus*, 69-71, and McKendrick, 101-03.

See Chart # 1

⁵ This is the birth of Renaissance rational thinking.

⁶ For the Duke of Savoy.

⁷ Chantilly, Musee Conde, MS 756 (507), and St. Petersburg, Russian National Library, IV 45.

⁸ Vasco's text had faded into obscurity but it was revived in recent times by Robert Bossuat, a French medievalist who worked extensively in this field. Among Vasco's manuscripts one of the finest works is in the Ludwig collection (written by Jan du Quesne, at Lille, ca. 1470-79), which was acquired by The Getty Museum in 1983. This Ludwig manuscript does not have the record of its medieval owner but it is speculated that the owner could have been a French speaking noble of the Burgundian court.

⁹ Ross, *Alexander Historiatus*, 1-7, 47-49, 67-81.

¹⁰ Ross, *Alexander Historiatus*, 69-71.

Three manuscript of Alexander produced in the late 15th century using the new printing technique. See chart 1.

¹¹ George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, D. J. A. Ross ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), n.pag.

¹² Vasco's translation expresses the rational contemporary humanist views of the late medieval period. Here Alexander is not a superhuman or prophet. He does not ascend to heaven or descend to the deep sea. He does not fight strange monsters or look for the fountain of life in the land of darkness. In Vasco's translation, Alexander is a great conqueror of far away lands, and a fierce commander of armies.

¹³ McKendrick, 14-15.

¹⁴ Ottomans defeated the Europeans and captured Constantinople in 1453.

¹⁵ Thomas Kren, ed. *Margaret of York, Simon Marmion, and the Visions of Tondal*, (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1991), 104.

¹⁶ *Histoire de Helayne*. Brussels, Royal Library, MS 9967, Fol. 39.

This miniature illustrates this refined court culture. See Walter Prevenier and Wim Blockmans, *The Burgundian Netherlands* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 252-73.

APPENDIX B

THE SHAHNAMA

The *Shahnama*, or Book of Kings, personifies the greatest of all national epics. It is a literary masterpiece that chronicles the complete history and culture of Iran. It equals among other great epics such as the Indian *Nala*, the Homeric *Iliad*, and the German *Nibelungen*. The epic depicts the complete era of Persian civilization and includes a portrait gallery of distinct and unique individuals. The *Shahnama* includes the traditional history of Iran from the first king Gayumar, up to the Arab conquest in the middle of the seventh century, chronicling about four thousand years of history.

The *Shahnama* was written by one of the most talented poets of Iran, Firdausi (ca. 975-1025). Firdausi wove the tapestry of his great work using many world literatures, historical facts, religious traditions, and mythical tales. His narratives have the spirit of freshness and vividness, whether they are the romances of Alexander¹ the Great, the exploits of Rustam, or the love scenes of Ardashir and Gulnar.

Firdausi is acknowledged as the national poet of Iran and he stands tall among great luminaries and immortals such as Homer, Virgil, as well as Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe. It was a labor of love and Firdausi devoted thirty-four years to this great work and presented the epic to Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (r. 998-1030) around 1015-1025. He started when he was 40, and continued until his death (ca. 1015-1025)². His aim was to glorify the history of his nation and honor the great heroes of Iran.

Due to the lack of research and availability of data, there is no authentic information about Firdausi's life and the name of his father. According to *Tarikh-e-Guzida*³ (1330) his real name was Abul Qasim Hasan bin Ali of Toos but many other names are also linked with his lineage. There are also some controversies about the date of his birth (ca. 931) as well as the date of his death (ca.1015-1025) but there is no dispute that Firdausi was born at or near the city of Toos in Khorasan province in northeastern Iran.⁴ Firdausi, like many other Iranian poets, often wrote under a pen name, or *takhallus*, which can represent an area, a name of patron, or in Firdausi's case, have a special meaning — Poet of paradise. Under his *takhallus*, Firdausi wrote the great epic in the form call *masnavi*.

In Iranian literature, long poems are known as *masnavis* and rhyme and meter are an integral part of this poetic language. The *Shahnama* comprises nearly sixty thousand *bayts* or couplets of flowing Persian verse,⁵ written in the meter known as Bahr-i-Taqarub.⁶ It is one of the simplest and most prevalent meters of Farsi Language as well as one of the popular meters for *masnavis*. In his *Khamasa*,⁷ (Appendix C) Nizami used a separate meter for all five of his poems, including the Bahr-i-Taqarub⁸ meter for his *Iskandarnama*.⁹

There are only three types of truly great *masnavi* poems according to P. B. Vachha:¹⁰ the *Razmiya*, heroic or epic like The *Shahnama*; the *Ishqiya*, romance, like Nizami's *Khamasa*; and the *Akhlaqi*, didactic or philosophical poems like Rumi's *Masnavi*. He further states that Nizami's *Iskandarnama* is the only *masnavi* which comes near the *Shahnama* in style and substance.

However he felt that Nizami's Alexander (Iskandar) lacked flesh-and-blood reality, and his battle scenes, though spirited, are in reality conscious copies of Firdausi's epic.¹¹

The *Shahnama* is not a didactic poem. It is an epic of courageous actions, of heroic battles, as well as fierce adventures. Firdausi's heroes personify moral characteristics¹² that include patriotism, courage, chivalry, as well as loyalty to king and country, along with truth and liberty. Firdausi has treated his subjects with refinement and naturalness. One can compare Nizami's *Khamsa* with the music of a harp or lyre, whereas Firdausi's *Shahnama* can be compared with the music of rolling waters and of murmuring woods.

Because of the musical and rhythmic nature of Iranian poetry, memorization and recitation of the poetry became very popular in Iranian society. The *Shahnama* became the primary text among the literati for recitation. There are no extant manuscripts dated earlier than two centuries after Firdausi's death, therefore, it is believed that current manuscripts include incorrect forms and fictitious verses.¹³ According to Ehsan Yarshater, even the earliest known versions of the *Shahnama* (Florence dated 1217, London dated 1276, and The Leningrad Public Library dated 1333) include many imaginary verses, and suffer from deletion of some text and distortion of meter.¹⁴

As early as the twelfth century, a demand for the permanent recording of all Firdausi's stories increased.¹⁵ Although many stories from the *Shahnama* were painted on ceramics in the late twelfth century, not until the

early fourteenth century did illustration of the epic became popular in manuscripts.¹⁶ In the 1430s and 1440s, the great Timurid prince Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh (d. 1457), one of the most enlightened patrons of paintings and manuscripts, and his brother Muhammad Juki, recompiled these great epic poems. They sponsored two imperial copies, which contained more than fifty thousand couplets.¹⁷ These lavishly illustrated imperial *Shahnamas* have crystalline forms and meticulous perfection and are the jewels of the fifteenth century.

The first part of the *Shahnama* depicts mythical tales of heroic deeds, adventures, triumphs, and bravery, as well as humility and romances of the great Persian heroes. In the second half of the book the characters and the narratives are based on more historical events.

In the second half of the *Shahnama*, the adventures of Alexander (Iskandar) are narrated. These historical accounts correspond with Iranian and Arab chronicle reports¹⁸ based on historical facts.¹⁹ Firdausi's main sources, besides oral tradition, were Pahlavi records,²⁰ as well as a thousand couplets of the epic written by his mentor, Daqiqi. Surprisingly no records seem to have derived from the Achaemenid history.²¹ The *Shahnama* chronicles both the Kayanian²² and Achaemenid dynasties, which were both at their zenith (ca. 320s and 330s B.C.E.), commanded vast territories, and wielded great power. With the death of Gushtap, the power and the glory of the Kayanian dynasty declined and eventually the dynasty was vanquished by Alexander. Around the same time, Alexander also defeated Dara the

second²³ or Darius III Codomanus at Issus in 334-30 ending the great Achaemenid Dynasty.

Although Alexander was the destroyer of the great Achaemenid Empire and undermined all that was sacred to Zoroastrianism, nevertheless Alexander was treated with sympathy by Firdausi. The poet endowed Alexander with multifaceted personas. He is a figure of fable and romance, with extraordinary powers, as well as a sage, and a warrior. In the second half of the *Shahnama* Firdausi regales the legendary life of Alexander and plagiarizes Alexander's lineage into royal Iranian ancestry.²⁴ He portrays Alexander as a legitimate son of Dara the First, the son that Dara never knew he had.²⁵

Firdausi's episodes create the vision of powerful living forms, of undying beauty, and of splendor. He paints with his words the passions and emotions of human nature, and transcends the heavenly beauty found in nature. In the last chapter of *Shahnama* he states — all the heroes have vanished like a dream but the written words remain and the star of Iran shines forever:

Jahan yadgarast-u ma raftani,
Zi mardum namanad juz az guftani. (Farsi)

"The world endures whereas we pass
away. Nothing survives of man except
his written words."²⁶

¹ Known in the Persian world as Iskandar.

² No authentic data is available.

³ One of the Persian chronicles.

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- ⁴ Olga M. Davidson, *Comparative Literature and Classical Persian Poetics* (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishing, 2000), 12.
- ⁵ These are long lines each approximately equivalent in length to two lines of standard English iambic pentameter verse.
- ⁶ Similar to Arabic Mutakarib meter. Dick Davis, *Epic and Sediton*, (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1992), 21.
- ⁷ Quintet, Five poems written by the poet Nizami, ca. 1270s-1320s.
- ⁸ Same as the *Shahnama*.
- ⁹ Book of Alexander the Great, one of the five poems of Nizami.
- ¹⁰ Author and Professor of Persian language, India.
- ¹¹ P. B. Vachha, *Firdausi and the Shahnama* (Bombay: New Book Co. Ltd., 1959), 120.
- ¹² Firdausi's fundamental belief is in monotheism, one God with human attributes, but he does not believe in one Supreme Being. This God is neither Allah, nor Jehovah, nor Ahura-Mazda. Most of his heroes in his epic are attributed with the same belief including Alexander the Great.
- ¹³ Ehsan Yarshater, *The Shahnamah (Book of Kings)*, vol. 1 (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 1988), 5-7.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., 5-9.
- ¹⁵ Marianna Shreve Simpson, "The Illustration of an Epic: The Earliest Shahnama Manuscripts" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1979), 320.
- ¹⁶ Sheila Canby, "Shahnama paintings at the British Museum," *Oriental Art* 40 (1994): 27-31.
- ¹⁷ Volkmar Enderlein, *Die Miniaturen der Berliner Baisongur-Handschrift* (Berlin: Bilderherzte der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 1991), n.pag.
- ¹⁸ The notations and inscriptions were not known or understood in Firdausi's time. Vachha, 122-25.
- ¹⁹ Olga M. Davidson, *Poet and Hero in the Persian Book of Kings* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1994), 13.
- ²⁰ Pahlavi literature was written between the third and the tenth centuries in Pahlavi (Middle Persian). It is almost entirely theological and liturgical literature written by Zoroastrians in the Pahlavi script.
- ²¹ D. Davis, "The Problem of Firdausi's sources," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 116 (1996): 48-57.
- ²² The history of the Kayanian dynasty as illustrated in *Shahnama* has no counterpart in the records of foreign writers. There is only one time when the history of these two dynasties seem to establish any contact: at the end when two giant empires are destroyed by Alexander in 331 B.C.E.
- ²³ Alexander's half-brother according to Persian Epic.
- ²⁴ Reuben Levy, *The Epic of the Kings: Sh'ah-n'ama, the National Epic of Persia* (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 1996), 228-30.
- ²⁵ See Chapter IVB, and Chart # 6, Illustration 36, *Birth of Alexander*.
- ²⁶ Vachha, 214.

APPENDIX C

THE *KHAMSA* OF NIZAMI

The *Khamisa* by Nizami (d.1209) is a book of five romantic poems. These epic poems reveal Nizami's genius for linguistic talents and artistic accomplishments making each character become part of the visual vocabulary. One just does not read the words alone but visualizes the panoramic scene depicted before one's eyes. Nizami was a brilliant storyteller and his precise physical descriptions of events and characters make the stories come alive. Even the simple events of daily life are as vividly portrayed as are the opulent court banquets and royal battle scenes.

The word *Khamisa*¹ literally means "Quintet." Nizami's work was written around the 1270s to 1320s, and consists of five-poems in the *masnavi* poetic form.² The first poem, "The Treasury of Mysteries," is a didactic-philosophical-mystical treatise, whereas the other four poems — "Khosrow and Shirin," "Layla and Majnun," "The Seven Princesses," and "Alexander the Great" (*Iskandarnama*) — are romances. The *Khamisa* is a voluminous book with approximately sixty thousand lines or about fifteen hundred pages; therefore, many abridged versions of the poems are available for today's readers.

Nizami was born around ca. 1140 in the town of Ganjeh, currently the city of Kirovabad in Azerbaijan. Though travelling had become easier during his time, Nizami rarely left his surrounding area, and once he called himself the "Prisoner of Ganjeh." His father was a devout Muslim who migrated from

the province Qum in north central Iran.³ From his poetry it is evident that he received an excellent education, and that he had a comprehensive knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, medicine, law, and philosophy, as well as music and the arts.⁴ His poem captured the depths of his feelings, his plays on words,⁵ and his mastery of the rhythm and cadence of *Farsi*.

Iranian poets often wrote under their pen names or *takhallus*. Nizami was the poet's pen name; his given name was Hakim Jamal al-din Abu Muhammad Ilyas ibn Yusuf ibn Zaki Mu'ayyad.

Rhyme and meter are an important part of Iranian poetry. Nizami's *masnavis* contain no irregularities in form. He also purified the rhyme, the meter,⁶ and the language, which had not been done in the pre-classical period, states H. Blochmann, the author of *The Prosody of the Persians*. That is why Nizami is referred to as the Imam of Persian poetry.⁷ P. B. Vachha remarks that Nizami is a great master of language and poetic art and has portrayed the character of Alexander with great panache.⁸ Perhaps no other Iranian poet has inspired succeeding generations of poets than Nizami. His influence is even greater than that of Firdausi⁹ or Hafiz,¹⁰ therefore he became the inspiration for contemporary poets in Iran, India, and Turkey. Furthermore, the rhyme and the meter from his *Khamasa* continue to serve as models even today.

For his *masnavis* Nizami synthesized pre-Islamic and Islamic Persian topics from oral tradition and historical records. Fascinated by the work of Firdausi, it was Nizami's goal to write a heroic epic. Therefore, for the theme of his last poem, he chose Alexander the Great, which also was recounted in

Firdausi's *Shahnama*.¹¹ He considered the *Iskandarnama* or Book of Alexander, his most important work and it contains some unrivaled passages. Nizami omitted some of the popular stories of Alexander as they were already told by Firdausi in his *Shahnama*, as he expected his readers to be familiar with them. That could be one of the reasons he chose to steer more towards the romantic version of Alexander's stories.

Iskandarnama,¹² has two distinct parts: the *Iskandarnama, e bara* or *Sharafnama*, and the *Iskandarnama, e bahri*, or *Iqbalnama ya Khiradnama-yi Iskandari*. Together these two works form the last poem of *Khamasa*, the *Iskandarnama*.¹³

Iskandarnama, e bara deals mostly with Iskandar's (Alexander's) adventures as a conqueror. This was written after the *Haft Paikar* (Seven Images, 1215), completed around 1219, and dedicated to Nasratu-'d-Din Abu Bakr (d. 1229).¹⁴ Here, the poet has portrayed Alexander as having tremendous strength and power, more than any human being can possess.

Nizami dedicated many long passages describing the adventures of Alexander, such as Alexander's battles with the Arsalankhan and King Kayd of Ceylon,¹⁵ or Alexander's battle against Qatil, the Zangi and what occurred between them. In addition the poet has written about Alexander's arrival in Turkistan by way of the Akhzar Sea, and the battle between Alexander and the Turkish rulers. Nizami wrote about Alexander plundering cities, conquering forts, ravishing enemies, as well as taking prisoners, and, against all odds, Alexander was always victorious. Beside the heroic adventures of Alexander, Nizami tackles some of the lesser-known stories of Alexander

such as Alexander entertained by the Khaqans and Alexander meeting the *Kaiser* of China.

Iskandarnama e bahri was dedicated to Malik al Kahir Izzu-d-Din, Masud bin Nuru-d-Din Arslan (d.1237), who ruled Mosul in the first half of the thirteenth century.¹⁶ It narrates Alexander's personal encounters with a sage, a prophet, and a hermit; and deals with more esoteric topics that are removed from the heroics of battles and diplomacy, which are recounted in *Iskandarnama, e bara*.¹⁷

Not content with Alexander's character as a mighty hero and a world conqueror, Nizami added a new dimension to his character. He portrayed Alexander as a mythical and scriptural figure and invented many romantic and heroic stories about this persona. Here Nizami deals with the stories of Alexander meeting seven sages, Alexander's pilgrimage to the tomb of Adam, and his journey from there to the land of gold, as well as Alexander arriving in fairyland and meeting Araqit, the Fairy Queen.

Nizami portrayed Alexander as an idealized hero with immense strength and power but failed to endow his persona with strong feeling and emotions. He portrayed Alexander as a ruler with self-doubt and frailties, as well as god-like virtues and strength, yet like a robot devoid of any human emotions. In the *Iskandarnama* Nizami has given more importance to the stories rather than the character of the protagonist.

J. Arberry, the British scholar of Near Eastern civilizations and translator and interpreter of its literature, says Nizami's romances emphasize human stories rather than heroic elements, and they share with

the *Shahnama* the honor of supplying Iranian illuminators with rich material for the great manuscripts.¹⁸ The illuminators depicted many varied thematic scenes, from the fierce battles to the romantic interludes, as their subject matter for the manuscripts. These epics with beautiful verses and brilliant paintings gave birth to some of the world's most magnificent books.¹⁹ The stories have been executed in countless manuscripts from the fourteenth century up to the nineteenth century. So popular are these subjects that they are found not only as illustrations of manuscripts but also as pictorial themes on ceramic tiles, chests, pen cases, textiles, and even carpets.²⁰

At least 250 illustrated manuscripts of the *Khamasa* are known.²¹ The original manuscript of the *Khamasa* is lost and it is believed that it was destroyed during the Mongol invasions.²² At present the earliest version of the *Khamasa* dates from 1362,²³ some one hundred and fifty years after the death of the poet. It is suggested that some verses of later versions of the *Khamasa* include interjections of later writers and copyists and are not all originals of Nizami.

One of the oldest manuscripts of the *Iskandarnama* by an unknown author or scribe is in the private library of Said Nafisi in Tehran.²⁴ At present the manuscript has 264 leaves. One or two introductory leaves are missing from the manuscript and the story comes to an abrupt end at page 264b. Because of the missing initial and ending pages one is not sure of the identity of the writer as in most cases the name of the author or compiler is given in the beginning or at the end. The editor of the first ever-printed

edition of the *Iskandarnama* believes that this Said Nafisi manuscript was written sometime between the twelfth and fourteenth century.²⁵

Professor Peter Chelkowski, an expert on Near Eastern languages and literatures, New York University, wrote this about the poet: "Nizami is not only a painter with words, but rather a sculptor or architect, who, using simple bricks (words) as his medium, builds palaces of breathtaking colors, and forms, as well as creates battle scenes with finesse and intricacy."²⁶

¹ The five epic poems of Nizami are also collectively known as the *Panj- Ganj* or five Treasures. Alexander Smith Cochran, *A Catalogue of the Collection of Persian Manuscripts* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1914), 48-50.

² In Persian literature, long poems are also known as *masnavis*, which are generally written in Bahr-i-Taqarub meter.

A *masnavi* is a string of distichs rhyming in pairs, used mainly for long epic poems of heroic, historic, and romantic characters, as well as for didactic, philosophical, and mystical poems similar to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

³ Some historians refer to the poet as Nizami of Ganjeh and some refer him as Nizami of Qum.

⁴ Peter J. Chelkowski, *Mirror of the Invisible World: Tales from the Khamsa of Nizami* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1975), n.pag.

⁵ However careful the translation, it can never capture the subtle nuances, play on words, and the multiple meanings of the poem.

⁶ The meter known as Bahr-i-Taqarub.

⁷ Henry Blochmann, *The Prosody of the Persians According to Saifi, Jami, and Other Writers* (Amsterdam: n.p., 1970), 20.

⁸ P. B. Vachha, *Firdausi and the Shahnama* (Bombay: New Book Co. Ltd., 1959), 121.

⁹ National poet of Persia who wrote the great *Shahnama*.

¹⁰ Another renowned poet of Iran.

¹¹ Reuben Levy, *The Epic of the Kings: Shāh-nāma, the National Epic of Persia* (Costa Mesa, California: Mazda Publishers, 1996), 1-5, 15-27.

¹² Also known in some parts of the Muslim world as *Sikandarnama*.

¹³ Cochran, 48-50.

¹⁴ Abu Muhammad Bin Yusuf Ayyid-I-Nizamuddin, *The Sikander Nama, E Bara* (New Delhi: Saeed International, 1989), 18.

¹⁵ Present day Sri Lanka.

¹⁶ Ayyid-I-Nizamuddin, *The Sikander Nama*, 18.

¹⁷ It is edited in 2 volumes by V. Dastgirdi (Tehran, 1937 and 1956).

¹⁸ A. J. Arberry, *The Legacy of Persia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 213

¹⁹ Ibid., 213-14.

²⁰ Oleg Grabar and Sheila Blair, *Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shahnama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 28-45.

²¹ L. N. Dodkhudoeva, *Poemy Nizamu v Srednevkovoy Miniaturnoy Zhivopisi* [Poems of Nizami in Medieval Miniature Painting] (Moscow: Izd-vo "Nauka," 1985) [with English summary], n.pag.

²² Chelkowski, *Mirror of the Invisible World*, 2.

²³ E. Blochet, *Catalogue des manuscrits persans de la Bibliotheque nationale*, vol.3, no. 1247. This manuscript is in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

²⁴ Dated 1318. Tehran University Central Library, MS 5179. Microfilm of this old manuscript is available in the library of Tehran University.

²⁵ Basil Gray, *Treasures of Asia Persian Painting* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1961), n.pag.

²⁶ Chelkowski, *Mirror of the Invisible World*, 8.

For further details regarding Nizami's life and works see: E. G. Browne, *Literary History of Persia* (London: 1906) 2, 399-411; P. Horn, *Geschichte der Persischen Litteratur* (Leipzig: 1901), 181-89. Also for partial translation of Nizami's poems in English refer to: Atkinson, *Khamisa of Nizami* (London: 1836); and F. V. Redmann, *Khamisa of Nizami* (Kazan: 1844).

CHART 1

List of Manuscripts: *Les fais d'Alexandre le grant* The Deeds of Alexander the Great, French translation by Vasco da Lucena

	City and Library	Manuscript Notations	Number of Folis & Miniatures, plus remarks	Date
1	Abbeville, Bibliotheque Municipale	MS 92		
2	Bern, Stadtbibliothek	MS A.25	210 fols. One presentation miniature (fol. 9). Commissioned by the Duke of Savoy.	1459
3	Cologne, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana	Cod. 53		Ca. 1470-75
4	Chantilly, Musee Conde	MS 755 (467)	Vellum, 12 + 256 fols. Large presentation miniature and 9 others.	2 nd half 15 c.
5	Chantilly, Musee Conde	MS 756 (507)	Paper, 223 fols.	Late 15th c.
6	Continental Europe, Private Collection, ex-Sotheby's, London	Phillipps MS 4409		MS 4409
7	Copenhagen, Royal Library	Thott 540	Vellum, 253 fols. 9 miniatures. Commissioned by Anthony of Burgundy and his bastard half-brother.	
8	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana	Palat. 155	Vellum. 261 fols. 23 miniatures	2 nd half 15 c.
9	Geneva, Bibl. Publique et Universitaire	fr. 76	Vellum, 279 fols. 10 large and 30 small miniatures.	Late 15th c.
10	Genoa, Biblioteca Universitaria	MS E.IX.2		
11	Gotha, Landesbibliothek	MS I.116		Late 15 th c.
12	Jena, Thuringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek	MS N.B.89 & 91	Vellum	Ca. 1470-75
13	London, British Museum Royal Library	Burney I69	Vellum, 204 fols. 52 miniatures.	Ca. 1470-5
14	London, British Museum, Royal Library	15 D IV	219 fols. 49 miniatures.	Ca. 1480
15	London, British Museum, Royal Library	17 F I	238 fols. 9 large and 11 small miniatures.	Late 15th c.
16	London, British Museum, Royal Library	20 C III	Vellum, 257 fols. One presentation miniature and 9 others.	Late 15th c.

17	Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum	Ludwig XV8	Vellum, 237 leaves, 11 miniatures with full decorated borders, Red velvet binding over wooden boards, with two engraved brass clasps. Scribe, Jan du Quesne, Lille.	Ca. 1470-79
18	New York, H. P. Kraus	Cata. No. 95 (I961), 360 MS 21	Vellum, 225 fols. 11 large and 3 small miniatures.	Ca. 1470
19	Oxford, Bodleian	Douce 318	Vellum, 246 fols. Spaces for 196 miniatures, none carried out.	2 nd half 15 c.
20	Oxford, Bodleian	Laud. Misc. 751	Vellum, 245 fols. + 4 fly-leaves, 19 miniatures.	Ca. 1470
21	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr. 47, 48, 49	Vellum, 59 + 89 + 100 = 248 fols. 53 miniatures.	2 nd half 15 c.
22	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr. 257	Vellum, 222 fols. 45 miniatures.	Ca. 1471-80
23	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr. 258.	Paper, 283 fols. One damaged miniature of nine or ten survives.	Late 15th c.
24	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr. 708,-711	Vellum, 159 fols. 83 miniatures	Ca. 1500
25	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr. 6440	Vellum, 256 fols. 18 miniatures	Late 15th c.
26	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr. 9738	Vellum, 221 fols. 17 clumsy miniatures and spaces. Nine folios with frontispieces.	2 nd half 15 c.
27	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr.11675	Vellum, 304 fols. (+ 29 lost), 57 surviving miniatures.	2 nd half 15 c.
28	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr. 20311	Vellum, 270 fols. 85 miniatures Supposedly a copy presented to Charles the Bold in 1470.	2 nd half 15 c.
29	Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale	fr. 22547		
30	Paris, Bibliotheque de Arsenal	MS 3687	Paper, 162 fols. Presentation miniature and 9 others.	2 nd half 15 c.
31	St. Petersburg, Russian National Library	F.p. IV 45	Paper, 269 fols.	Late 15th c.
32	Stockholm, Skokloster	MS 131		
33	Vatican, Regia	MS 736	Vellum, 259 fols. Presentation miniature and 2 others.	
34	Vienna, Nationalbibliothek	MS 2566	Commissioned for Louis, Batard de Bourbon. Vellum, 166 fols. 291 miniatures of fine quality by three artists	Before 1481

Three manuscript of Alexander produced in the late fifteenth century using the new printing technique.

	City and Library	Manuscript Notaions	Number of Folis & Minatures, plus remarks	Date
1	Paris, Verard, Copy in Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale Reserve.	J.85	Paper, 252 Fols. Two of Verard's stock cuts and one repeat.	Ca. 1500
2	Paris, Michel Le Noir, Copy in Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale.	J.1713	Paper, 200 fols. One of Le Noir's stock cuts on title-page	Ca. 1500
3	Paris, Jacques le Messier, Copy in Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale.	J.814	Paper, 116 fols. Title-border on fol. a i and one cut from Verard's Josephus on fol. a vi verso.	Ca. 1500

CHART 2

List of Known Timurid Manuscripts: The *Khamisa* of Nizami and The *Shahnama*:

Khamisa of Nizami

- A. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Copied by Ali Hasan al-Sultani, Tabriz, ca. 1405-20. Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art, 31.34.
- B. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Copied for Iskandar ibn Umar-Shaykh, Shiraz, 1410-11. London, British Library, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Add. 27261.
- C. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Copied for Abu-Sa'id ibn Sultan-Muhammad ibn Miranshah, 1423. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. 8 illustrations. New York, Kevorkian Foundation.
- D. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Copied ca. 1425-50. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 13.228.13.
- E. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Calligrapher Muhammad Muhtahhar. Copied for Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh, 1430. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. Tehran, Malik Library, no.6531.
- F. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Copied ca. 1430. London, Keir collection.
- G. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Calligrapher Muhammad Taqi. Copied for Shah Rukh ibn Timur, 1431. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. 23.3 x 13.2 cm. 502 folios with 38 illustrations. St. Petersburg, Hermitage State Library, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000.
- H. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Copied ca. 1440-50. London, Keir collection.
- I. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Painted by Bihzad. Probably Herat, copied 1442. 19 x 12 cm. 316 folios with 19 paintings, fourteen paintings added to the manuscript around 1490. Add. London, The British Museum, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Add. 25900.
- J. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Calligrapher Yusuf al-Jami. Copied for Ismat al-Dunya, wife of Muhammad-Juki ibn Shah Rukh, Herat, 1445-46. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. 24.1 x 16 cm. 325 folios with 13 illustrations. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, Cat. no. 32, H.781.
- K. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Shiraz, 1444-45. Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS. 36
- L. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Copied for Pir-Budaq Qaraqoyunlu, 1461. Gold on paper. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H.761.
- M. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Probably Isfahan, copied 1463. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms.137.
- N. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Calligrapher Azhar. Copied for Abu'l-qasim Babur, Tabriz, ca. 1480. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. 29.7 x 19.2 cm. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H.762.
- O. *Khamisa* of Nizami, Copied by Darvish Muhammad Taqi, painted after Bihzad, Herat, 1481. St. Petersburg, Hermitage State Library, No.338.

- P. *Khamasa* of Nizami, Painted by Bihzad or pupil of Bihzad. Copied for Amir Ali farsi Barlas, probably Herat, 1494-95. 19 x 12 cm. Opaque water color, ink, and gold on paper. 20 x 14 cm. 203 folios with 22 illustrations. London, British Library, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or. 6810.

Shahnama

- A. *Shahnama*, Herat, copied ca. 1425-50. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 26.3 x 17.5 cm. Two folios. Most pages are dispersed. Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, M.66A-B.
- B. *Shahnama*, Calligrapher Jafar al-Baysunghuri. Copied for Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh, Herat, 1430. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. 21 Illustrations. Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 61.
- C. *Shahnama*, Calligrapher Muhammad Muhtahhar. Copied for Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh, 1430. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, no. 6531.
- D. *Shahnama*, Illuminated calligrapher Nasr al-Sultani. Copied for Ibrahim-Sultan ibn Shah Rukh, Shiraz, ca. 1435. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. 469 folios with 47 illustrations, five gold tinted drawings. Oxford, Bodleian Library, cat. no 58, Ms. Ouseley, Add.176.
- E. *Shahnama*, 1437, from south province 94 miniatures, British Library, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or. 1403.
- F. *Shahnama*, Copied for Muhammad-Juke, ca. 1440-45. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper, 34 x 22 cm. 491 folios with 31 illustrations. London, Royal Asiatic Society, MS.239.
- G. *Shahnama*, ca. 1440-50. Fine strong paper, 25.05 x 17.1 cm. 410 folios. Text, 4 columns of 24 lines. 74 miniatures. St. Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PTR, 1964 no. 2293.
- H. *Shahnama*, Copied by Muhammad al-Sultani, Shiraz, 1444. 37.5 x 27.5 cm. Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, Sup.Pers. 494. Double-page frontispiece of the same *Shahnama* in Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, 45.169-56.10.
- I. *Shahnama*, copied for Ibrahim Sultan, Yazd, 1445. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. Collection of Orient Institute, Hermitage, St.Petersburg, Cat. 30.
- J. *Shahnama*, copied for the descendent of Ibrahim Sultan, Shiraz, 1457. In the private collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, Cat. 16.
- K. *Shahnama*, Shiraz, ca. 1470s. Nearly square. The Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 19.755.
- L. *Shahnama*, Herat, ca. 1480. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, P.157.
- M. *Shahnama*, Turkman school, Copied ca. 1480s. 22.2 x 13.6 cm. Most pages are dispersed. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 40.38.1.
- N. *Shahnama*, Turkman school, Copied ca. 1486, Seventy-two miniatures of which some are missing. The miniatures in above (M) The

Metropolitan Museum of Art, may be from the same volume of the *Shahnama* as this one. London, British library, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Add. 18188.

- O. *Shahnama*, Calligrapher Salik ibn Said. Copied for Sultan-Ali Mirza Gilan, 1493-94. Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper. 34.6 x 24.4 cm. Pages are partially dispersed: Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Institute, Arthur Sackler Gallery, S86.0176; 202 paintings at Istanbul, Turk ve Islam Eserleri Muzesi; and 109 paintings at Istanbul, Istanbul University Library.
- P. *Shahnama*, Hertat, 15 the century. Dispersed leaf at J. Pierpont Morgan Library M. 847.

CHART 3

Beside the *Shahnama* and the *Khamsa*, List of Other Timurid Manuscripts, Where Same Page Design and Color Schematics are used in the Illuminated Frontispiece

	Manuscripts	Colection	Library	Date
1	<i>Khalila u Dimna</i> of Nazamuddin Abul-Maali Nasrullah	Scribe, Shamsuddin for Baysunghur	Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, R.1022,	Herat 1429,
2	Lost manuscript for Baysunghur		Dublin, The Chester Beatty Library, MS120	Herat 1430
3	<i>Jami al-usul</i> of Ibn al-Athir	Hadith (Tradition of the Prophet)	Dublin, The Chester Beatty Library, MS5282	Herat 1435-6
4	<i>Masnavi-i Masnavi</i>	Poet, Jalal al-Din Rumi	St. Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PTR, # 3719	Herat 1450
5	<i>Bustan</i> of Sadi	Scribe, Ali al-Katib for Sultan Husayn Mirza	Cairo, Egyptian Book Org. Adab Farsi 908	Herat 1488
6	<i>Divan</i> of Sultan Husayn Mirza	In the form of Ghazals	Istanbul, Turk ve Islam Eserleri Muzesi	Herat 1490
7	<i>Divan-I Husaini</i> for Husain Baiqara	In the form of Ghazals	St. Petersburg, Teaching Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cat. PTR, # 237	Herat 1491

CHART 4

Subjects of Large Miniatures of Vasco's Text in the Getty, Bodimer, Jena and Paris Manuscripts

Books	Getty Ludwig XV8	Bodimer 53	Jenna El. fol. 89	Paris fr. 257
Prologue	Vasco de Lucena Presents His Translation to Charles the Bold			Vasco de Lucena Presents His Translation to Charles the Bold
1	Birth of Alexander	Birth of Alexander	Birth of Alexander	Birth of Alexander
2	Alexander's Illness at the Cydnus River and the Death of Sisinnus	Alexander's Illness at the Cydnus River	The Capture of the Family of Darius	The Surrender of the City of Celenenae
3	Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre	Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre	Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre	Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre (?)
4	The Competition in Sittacene and Placating of Sisigambis	The Competition in Sittacene and Placating of Sisigambis	The Competition in Sittacene and Placating of Sisigambis	Alexander Enters Babylon
5	Alexander and the Niece of Artaxerxes III	Alexander and the Niece of Artaxerxes III	Alexander and the Niece of Artaxerxes III	The Death of Alexander the Molossian
	Bagoas Pleads on Behalf of Nabarzanes; Thalestris and the Amazons Visit Alexander			
6	The Execution of Philotas	The Execution of Philotas	The Execution of Philotas and Murder of Permenion	The Execution of Philotas
7	Alexander Fights with a Lion and kills Clitus	Alexander Fights with a Lion and kills Clitus	Alexander Fights with a Lion and kills Clitus	The Ambush of Attinas; Alexander Fights a lion
8	Alexander Fights	Alexander Fights	Alexander Fights	Alexander

	in the Town of the Sudracae	in the Town of the Sudracae	in the Town of the Sudracae	Orders Ships to Be Built
9	Orsines Presents a Gift to Alexander; The Execution of Orsines	The Execution of Cleander and Sitalces	Alexander Collapses at a Banquet in Babylon	The Execution of Cleander and Sitalces

CHART 5

The Getty Ludwig XV8 Manuscript: List of Fourteen Plates and Illustrations

- Plate 1: Vasco Da Lucena Presents His Translation to Charles the Bold
(Fol. 2v)
- Plate 2: The Birth of Alexander (Fol. 15r)
- Plate 3: Alexander's Illness at the Cydnus River and the Death of Sisinnes
(Fol. 41r)
- Plate 4: Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre (Fol. 61r)
- Plate 5: *The competition in Sittacene and the Placating of Sisigambis*
(Fol. 99r)
- Plate 6: Alexander and the Niece of Artaxerxes III (Fol. 123r)
- Plate 7: *Bagoas Pleads on Behalf of Nabarzanes; Thalestris and Amazons Visit Alexander* (Fol. 133v)
- Plate 8: Alexander Orders the Destruction of His Army's Excess Baggage
(Fol. 135v)
- Plate 9: The execution of Philotas (Fol. 149r)
- Plate 10: *Death of Permenion* (Fol. 154r)
- Plate 11: The Founding of Alexandria-in-Caucaso (fol. 156v)
- Plate 12: Alexander Fights with a Lion and Kills Clitus (Fol. 175r)
- Plate 13: Alexander Fights in the Town of the Sudracae (Fol. 204r)
- Plate 14: Orsines Presents a Gift to Alexander; the Execution of Orsines
(Fol. 226r)

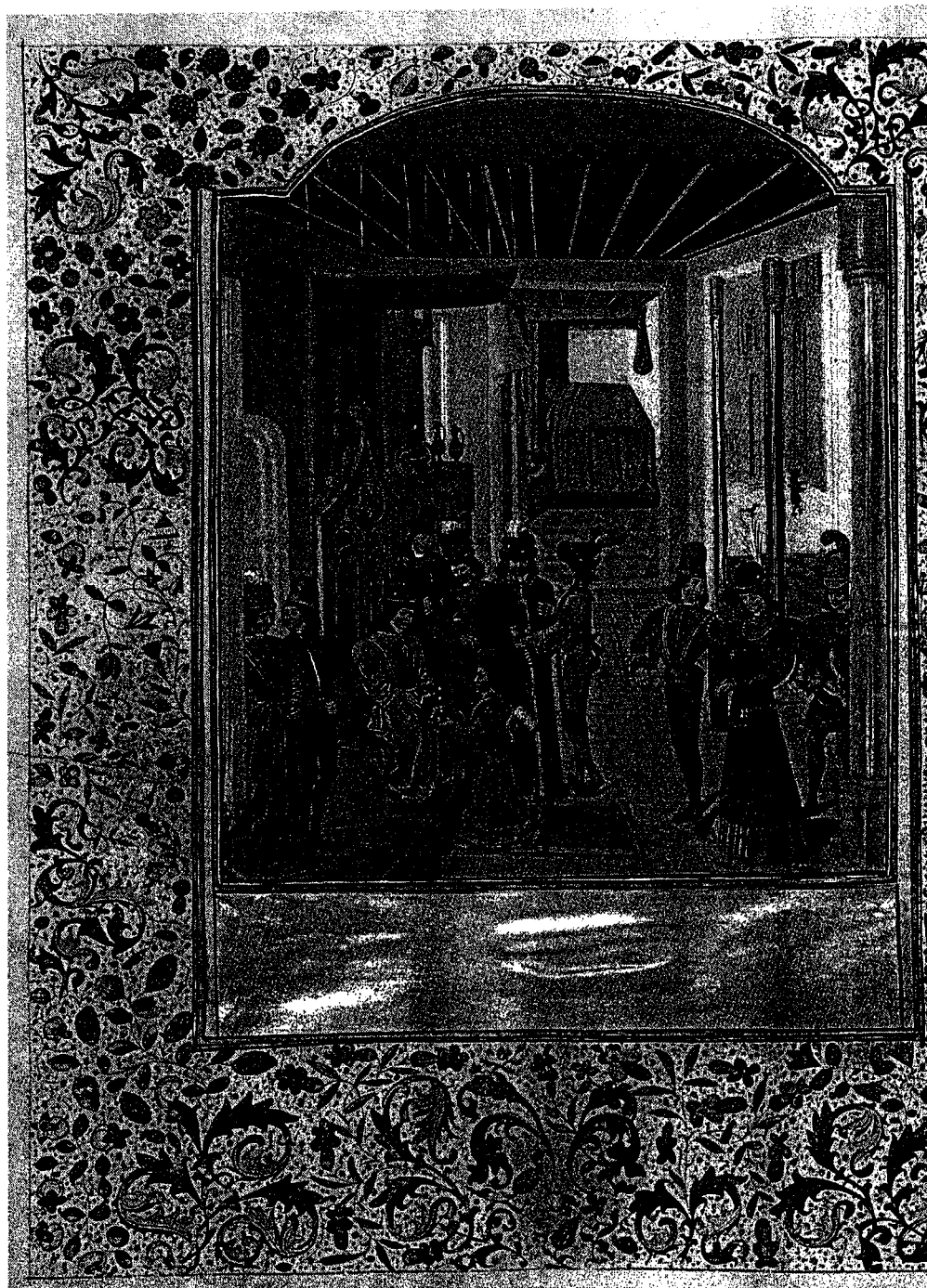


Plate 1

Vasco Da Lucena Presents His Translation to Charles the Bold, The Ludwig XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 83.MR.178.fol. 2v

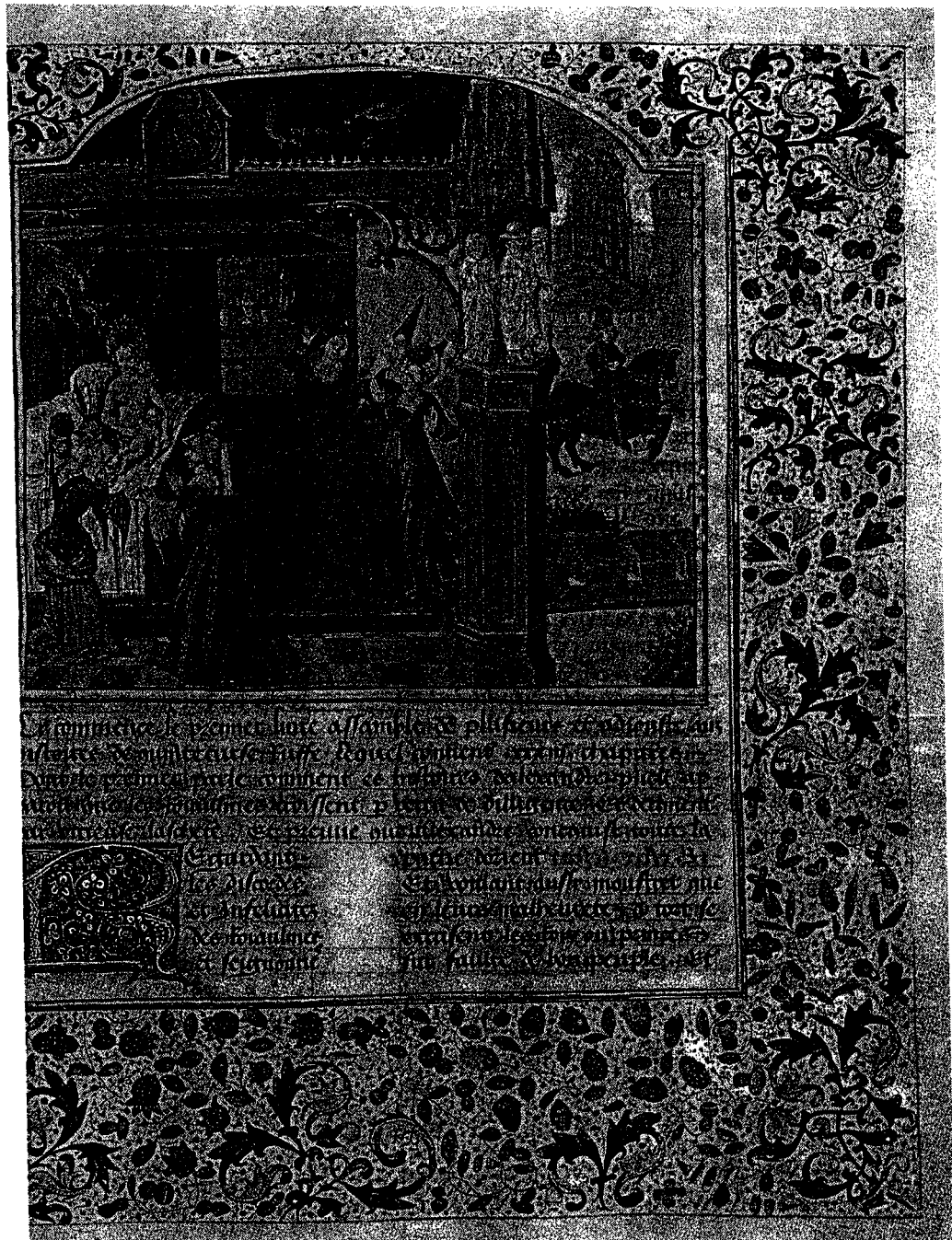


Plate 2

The Birth of Alexander, Ludwig XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 83.MR.178.fol. 15r

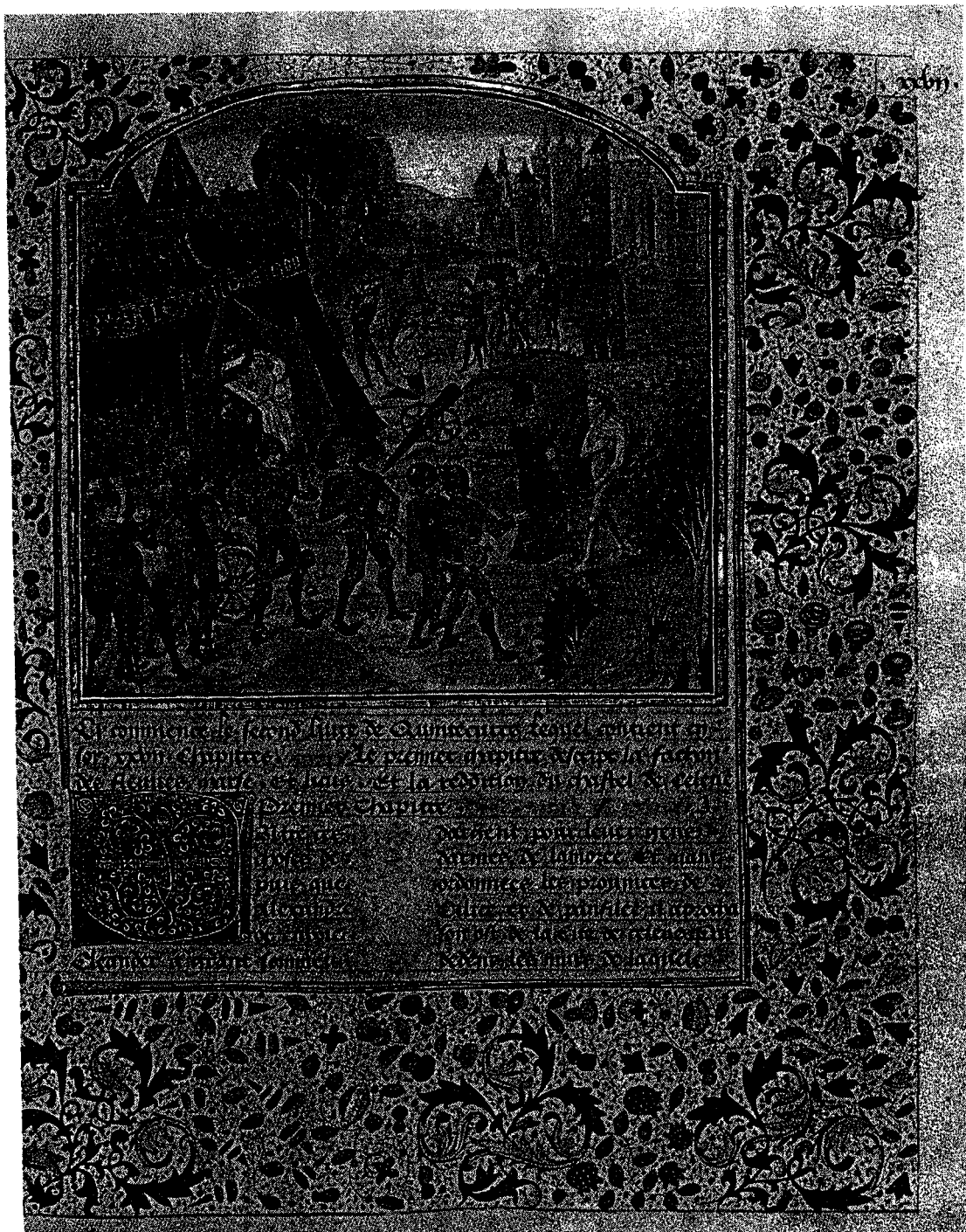


Plate 3

*Alexander's Illness at the Cydnus River and the Death of Sisinnus, The
 Ludwig XV Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum,
 83.MR.178.fol. 41r*

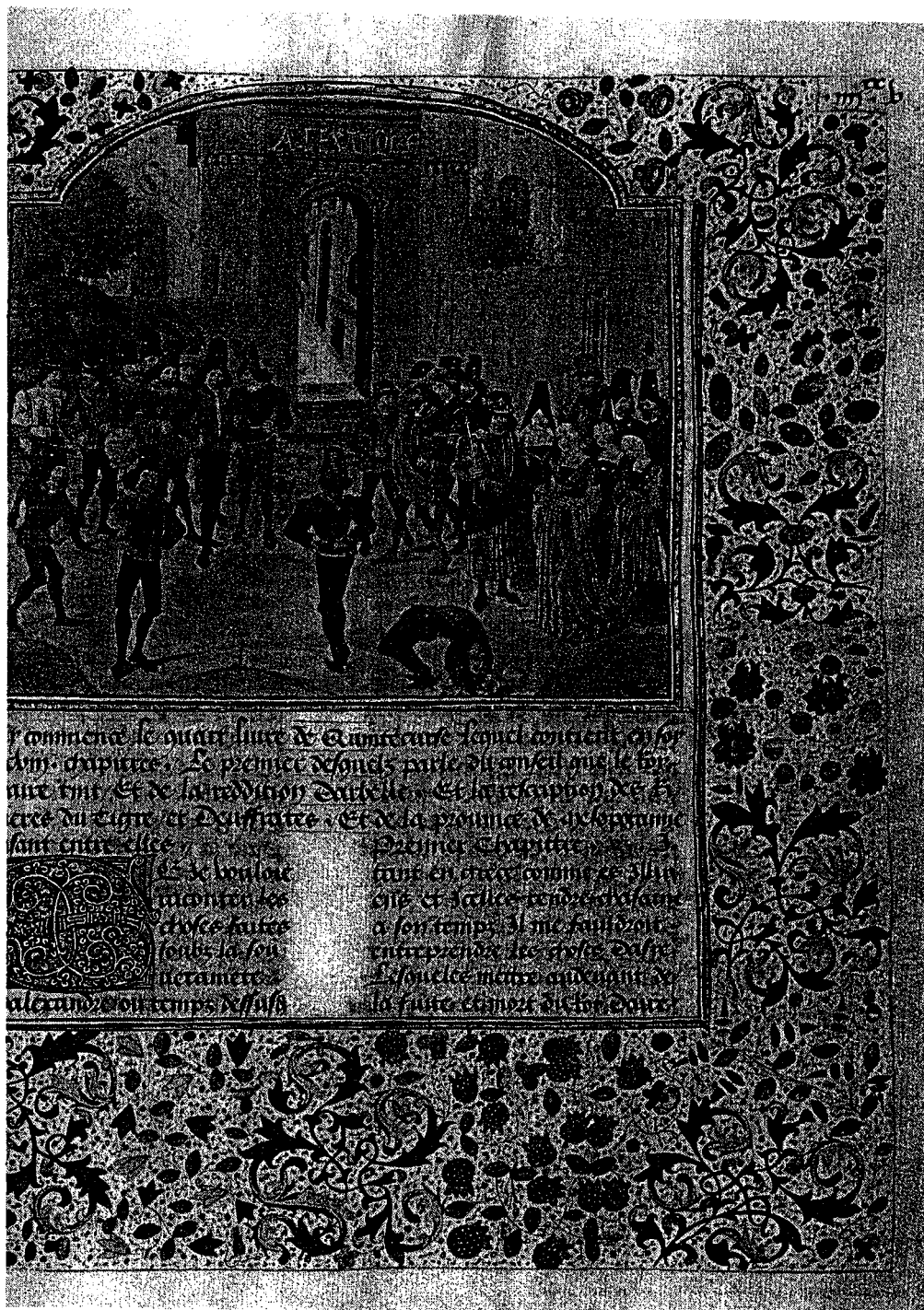


Plate5

*The competition in Sittacene and the Placating of Sisigambis,
The Ludwig XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum,
83.MR.178.fol. 99r*

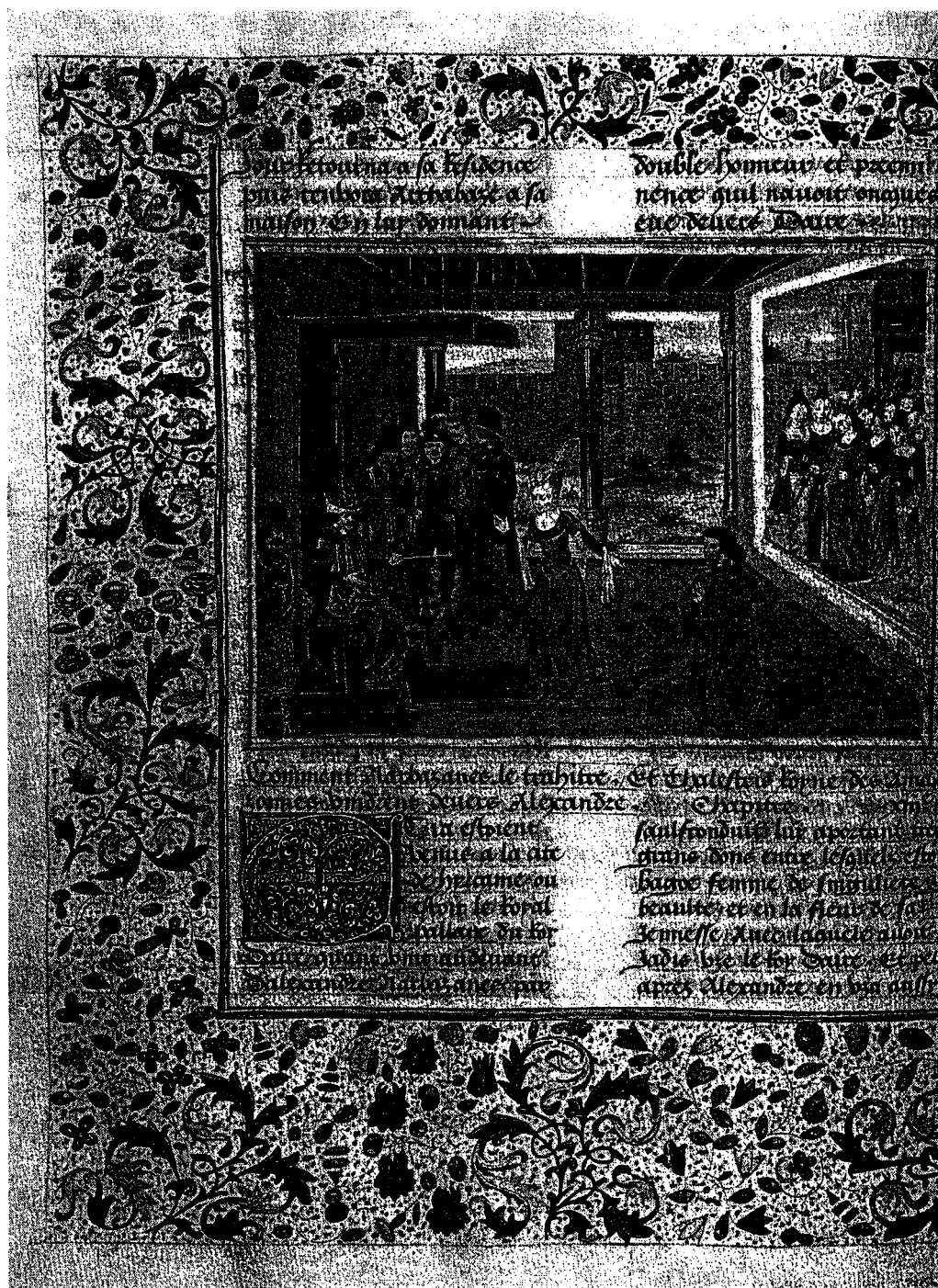


Plate 7

Bagoas Pleads on Behalf of Nabarzanes, Thalestris and Amazons Visit Alexander, The Ludwig XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 83.MR.178.fol. 133v

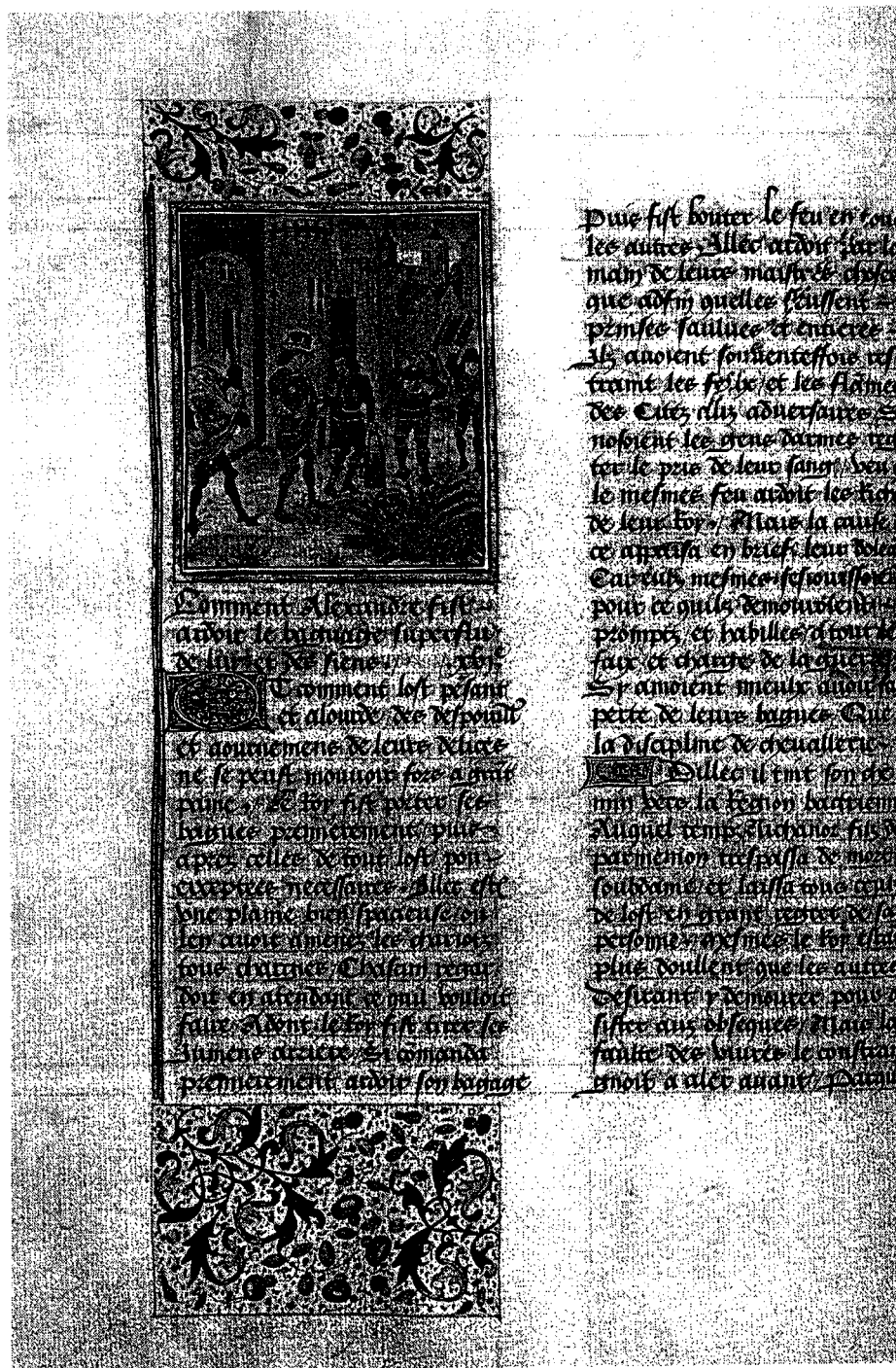


Plate 8

Alexander Orders the Destruction of His Army's Excess Baggage,
 The Ludwigs 18 Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum,
 83.MR.178.fol. 135v

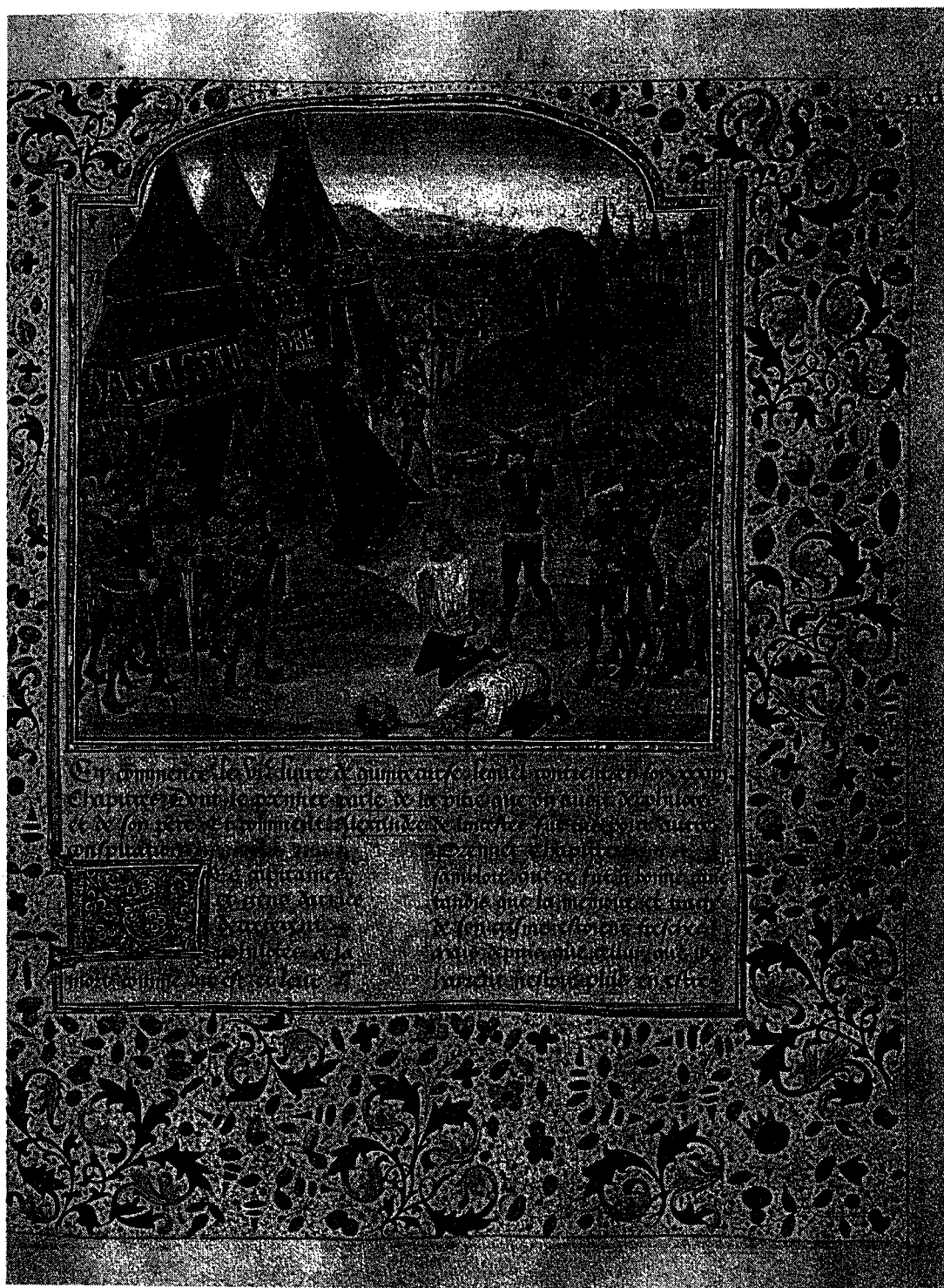


Plate 9

*The execution of Philotas, The Ludvig XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles,
The J. Paul Getty Museum, 83.MR.178.fol. 149r*

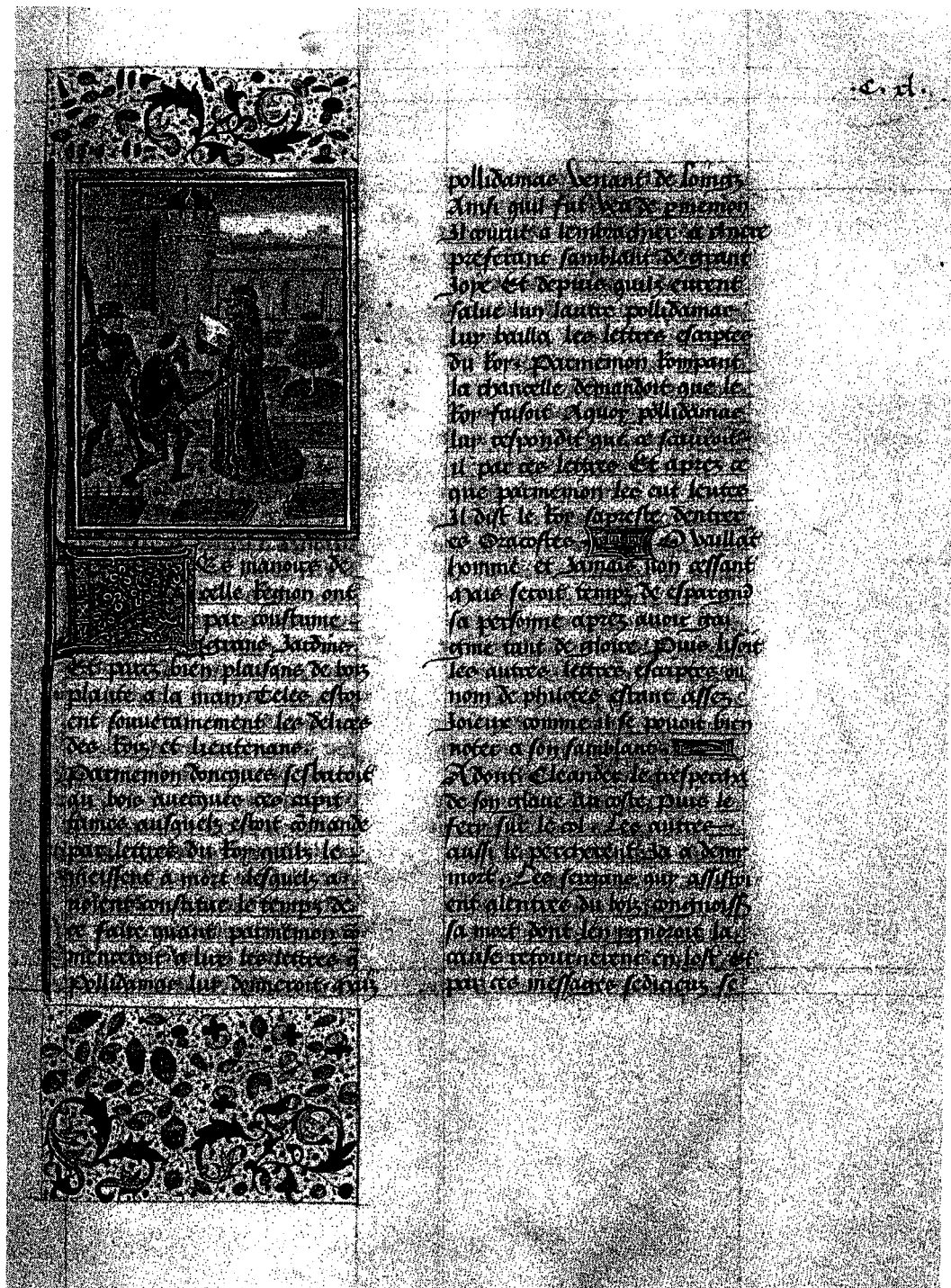


Plate 10

*Death of Permenion, The Ludwig XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles,
 The J. Paul Getty Museum, 83.MR.178.fol. 154r*



Plate 11

The Founding of Alexandria-in-Caucaso, The Ludwigs XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 83.MR.178.fol. 156v

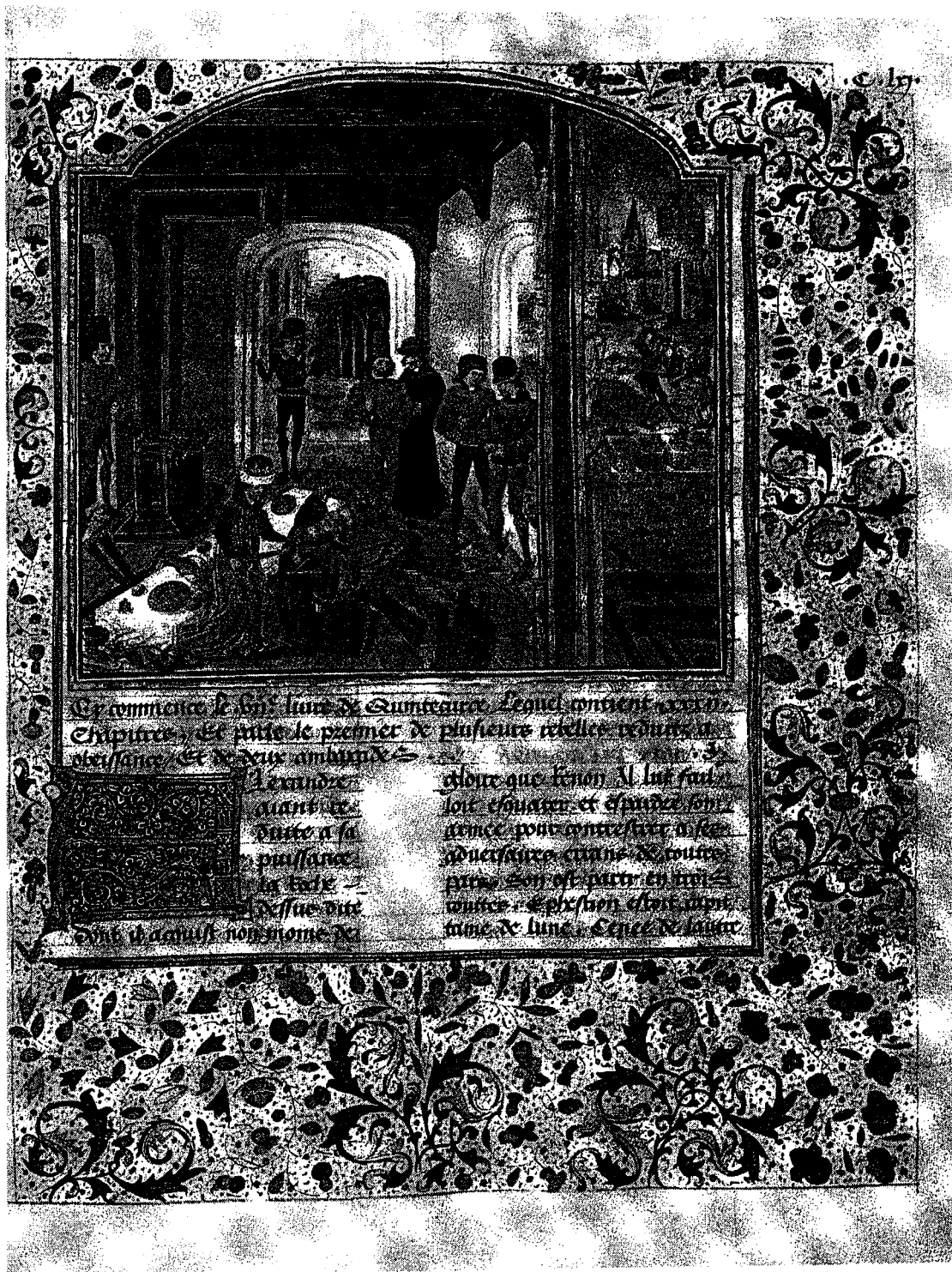


Plate 12

Alexander Fights with a Lion and Kills Clitus, The Ludvig XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 83.MR.178.fol. 175r

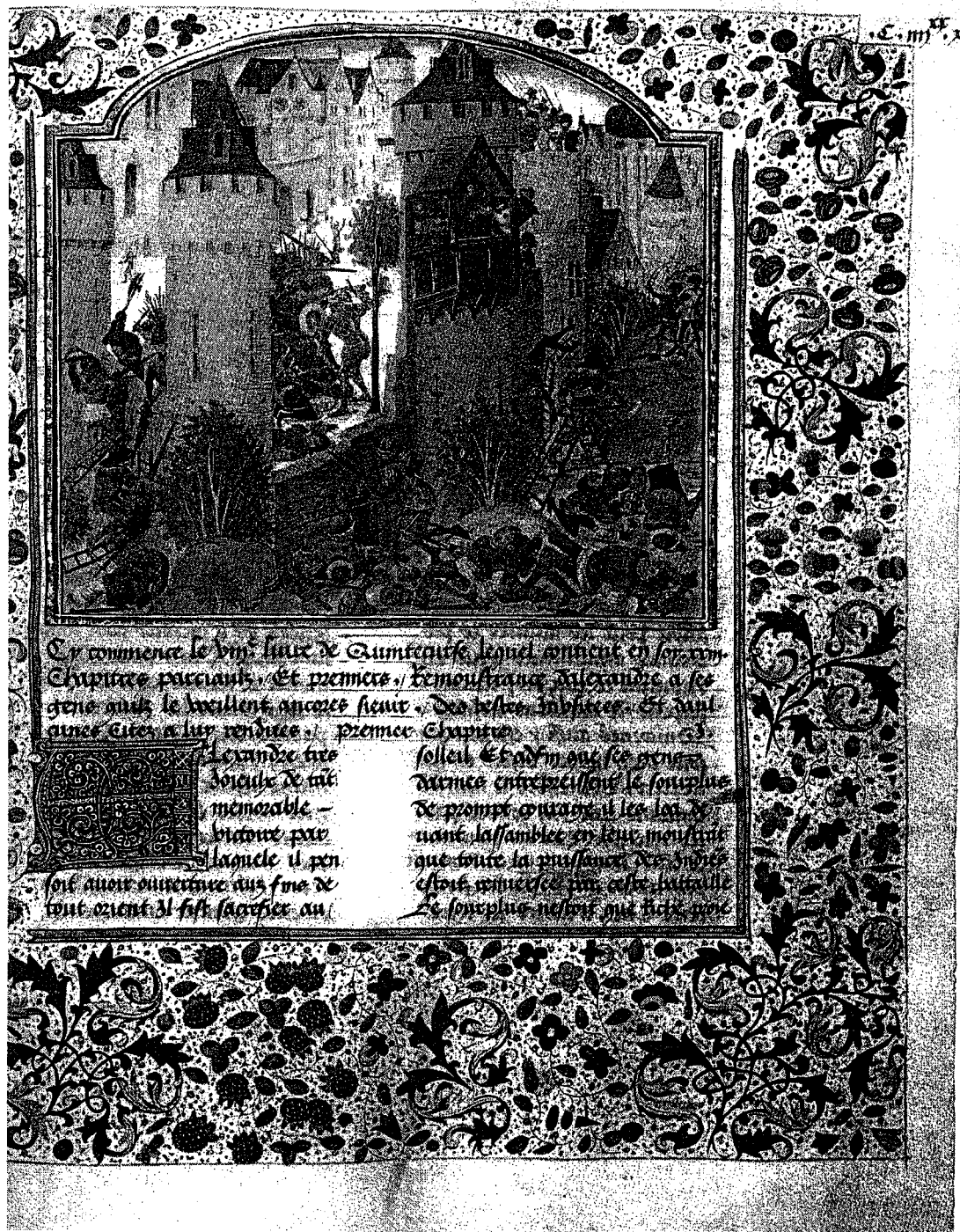
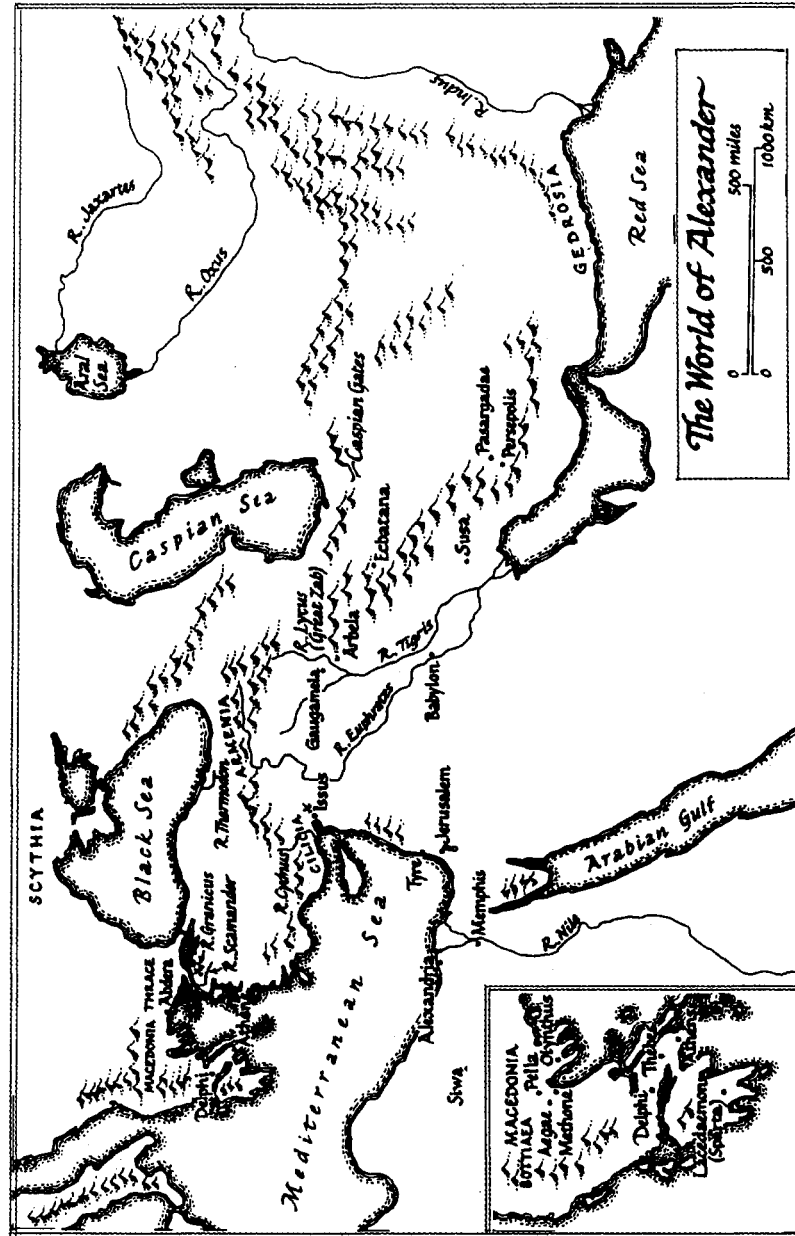


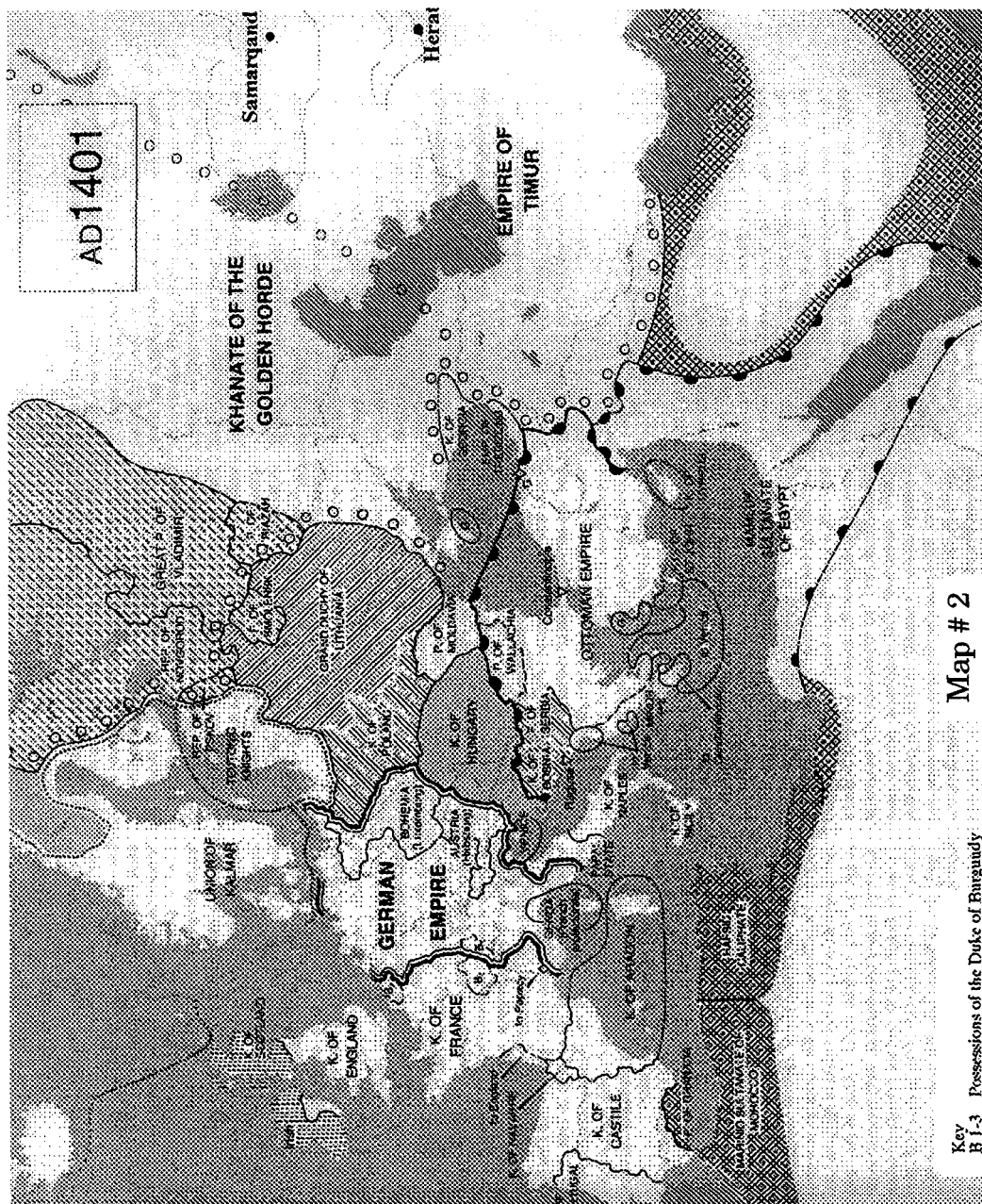
Plate 13

Alexander Fights in the Town of the Sudracae, The Ludwigs XV8 Manuscript, Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 83.MR.178.fol. 204r



Map # 1

*The world of Alexander,
 McKendrick, Scot. The History of Alexander the Great : an Illuminated
 Manuscript of Vasco da Lucena's French Translation of the Ancient Text by
 Quintus Curtius Rufus. Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.*



Timurid Empire 1401 C.E., McEvedy, Collin. *The New Penguin Atlas of Medieval History*, New York: Penguin, 1992.

Pseudo-Callisthenes • 8

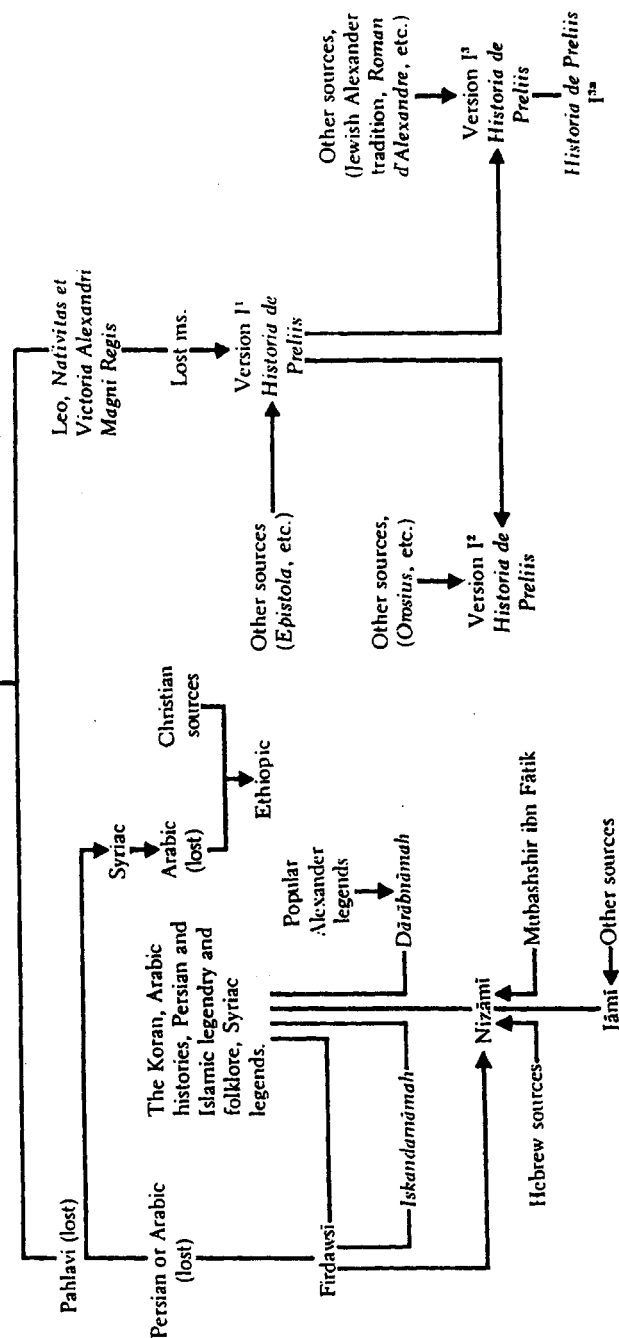


Diagram # 3

Pseudo-Callisthenes, Persian Romances of Alexander in the δ Recension, Ross,
David John Athole. *Alexander Historiatus: A Guide to Medieval Illustrated
Alexander Literature*, 2nd ed. Frankfurt am Main: Athenaum, 1988.

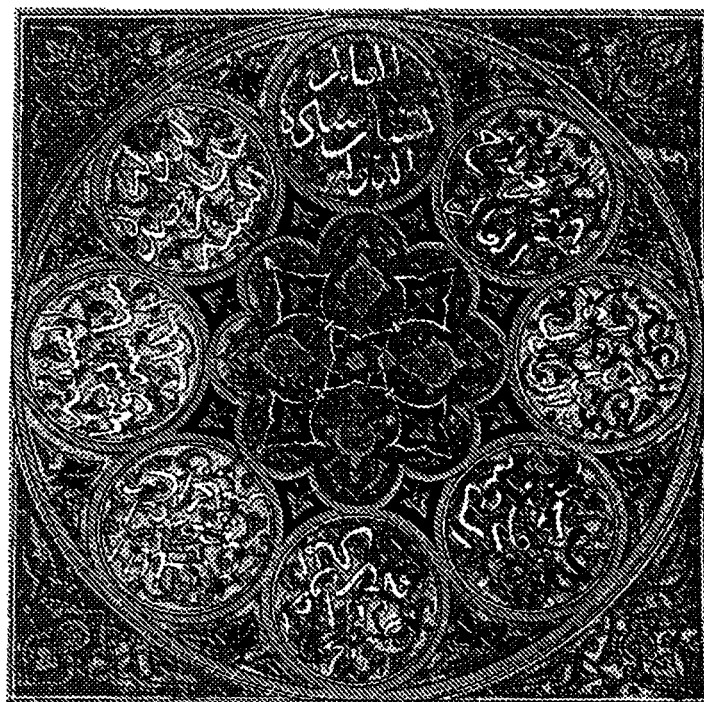


Illustration # 4

Nasayih-i Iskandar, The Counsels of Alexander,
 ca. 1425. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS. 4183, f.12a

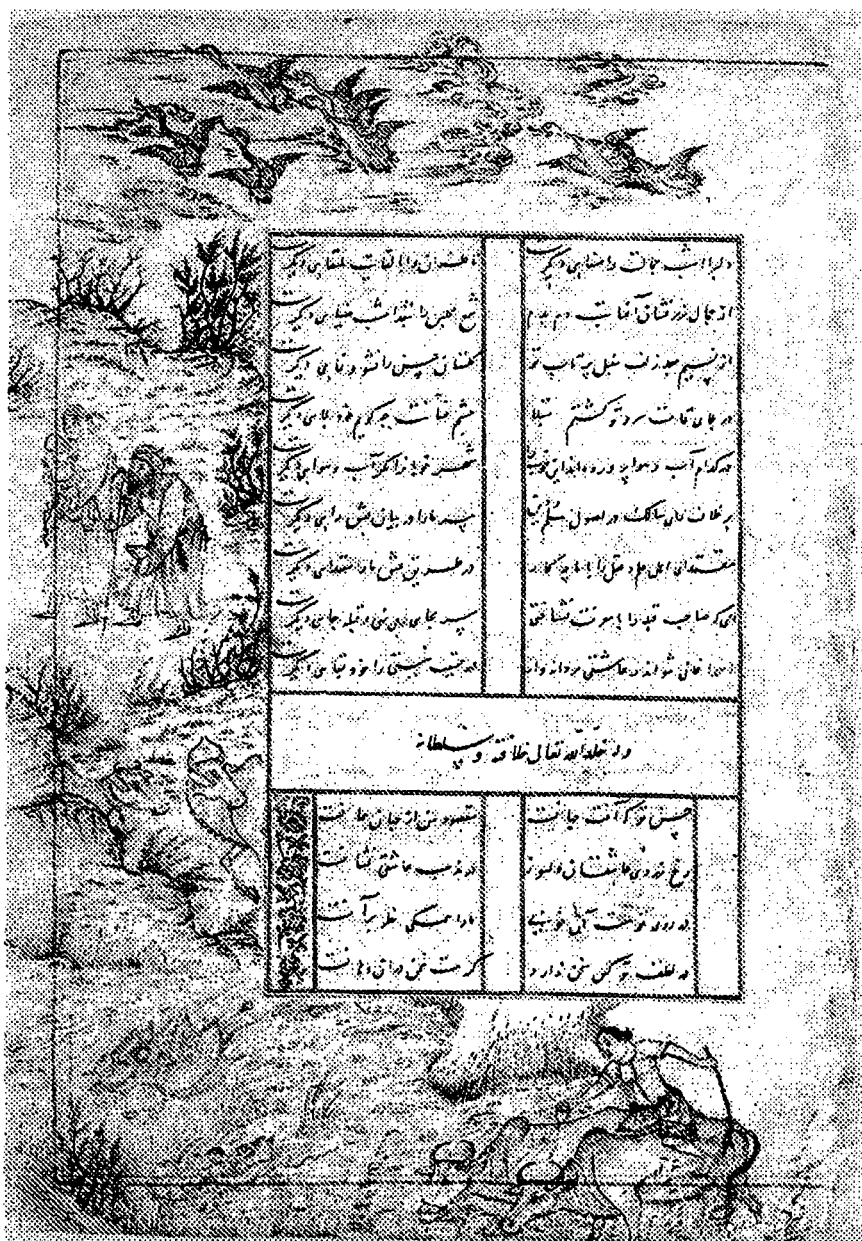


Illustration # 6

Divan, of Sultan Ahmad Jalayr, Baghdad, 1402-5.
Washington D.C., The Freer Gallery of Art, MS 32.35

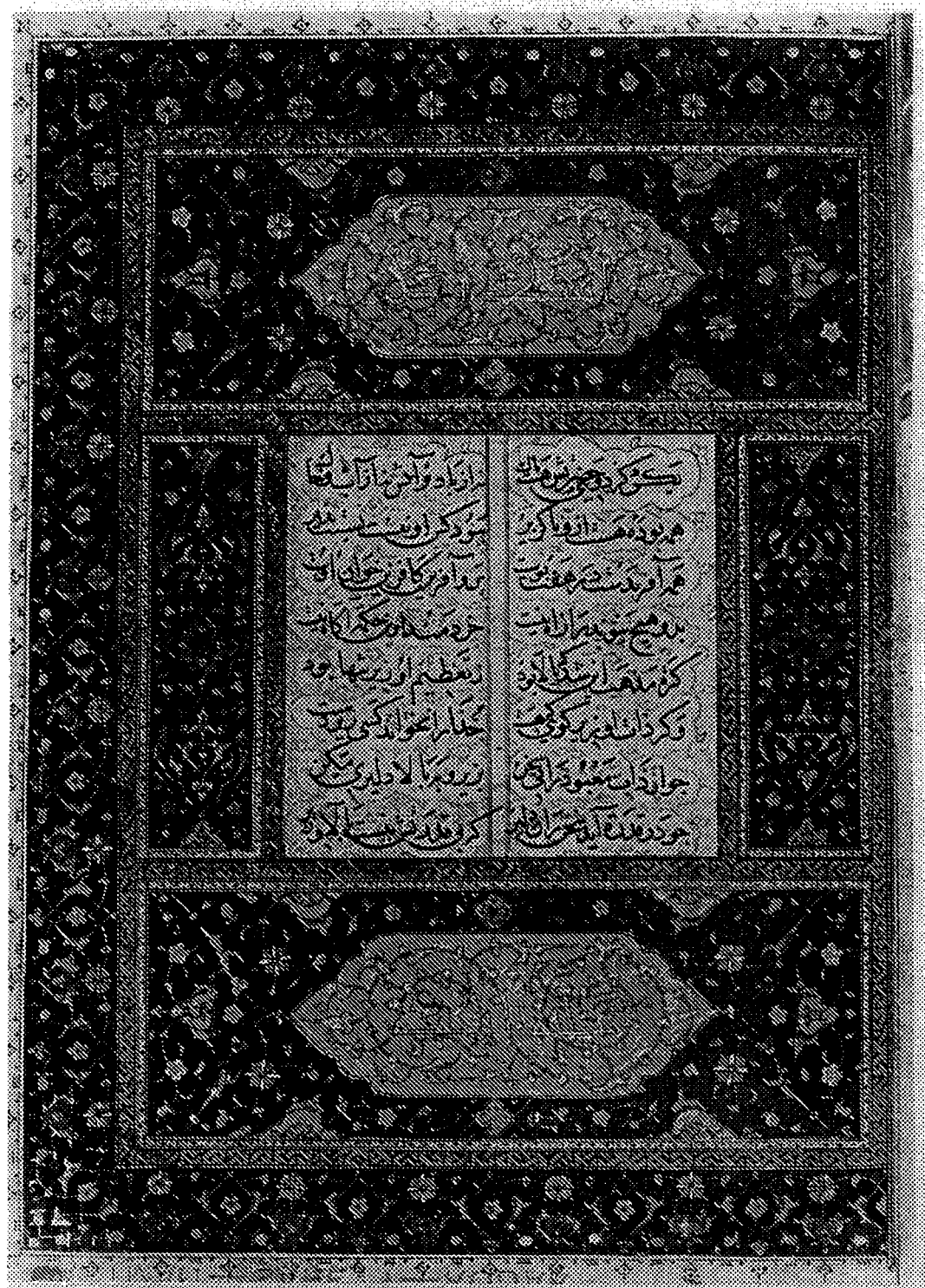


Illustration # 7

Frontispieces of *Khamsa*, Herat, ca. 1400. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913, MS 9. Fol. 245

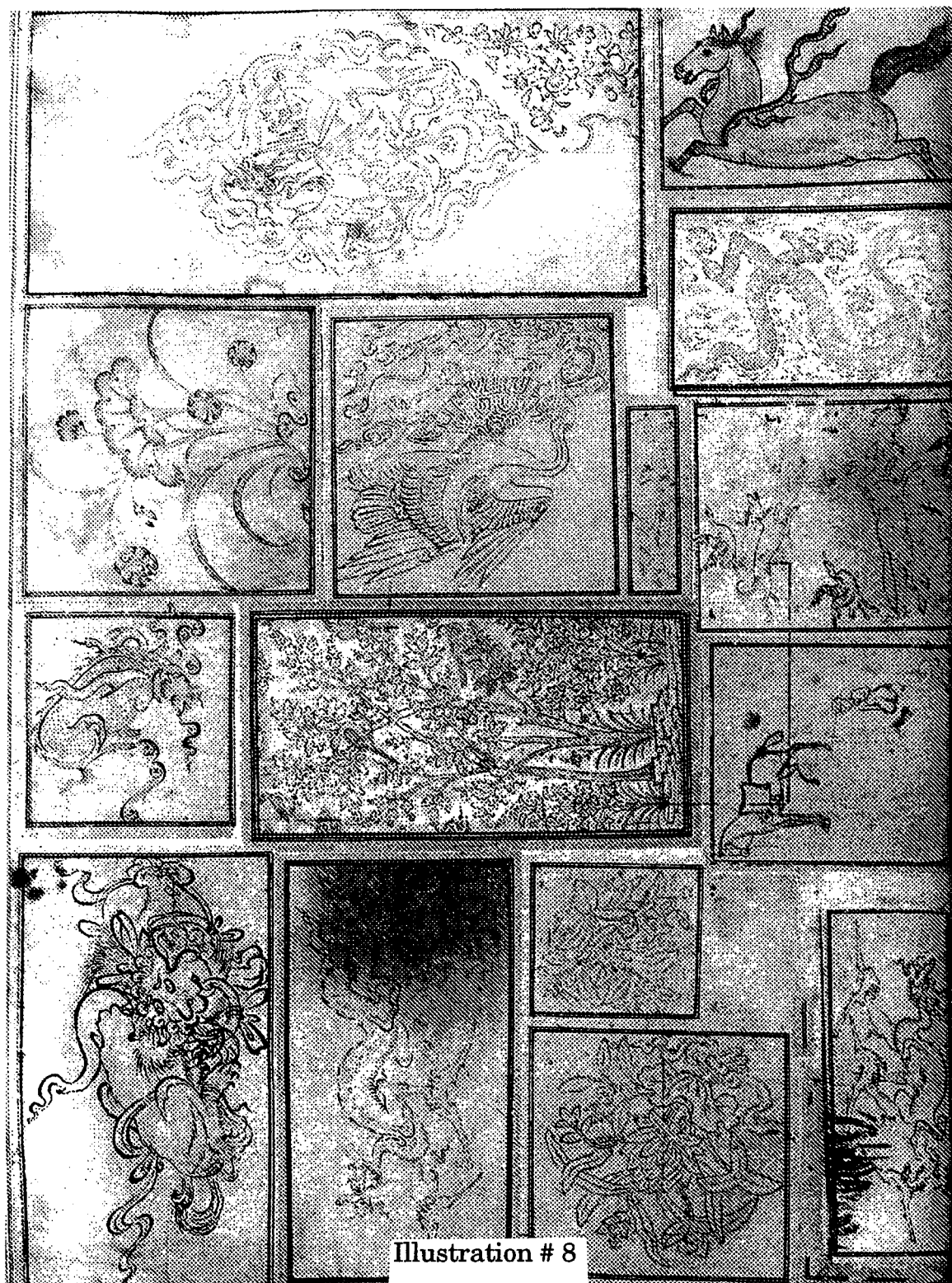


Illustration # 8

Album pages of preparatory drawings, sketches, and designs,
 Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H. 2152. Fol. 86 a

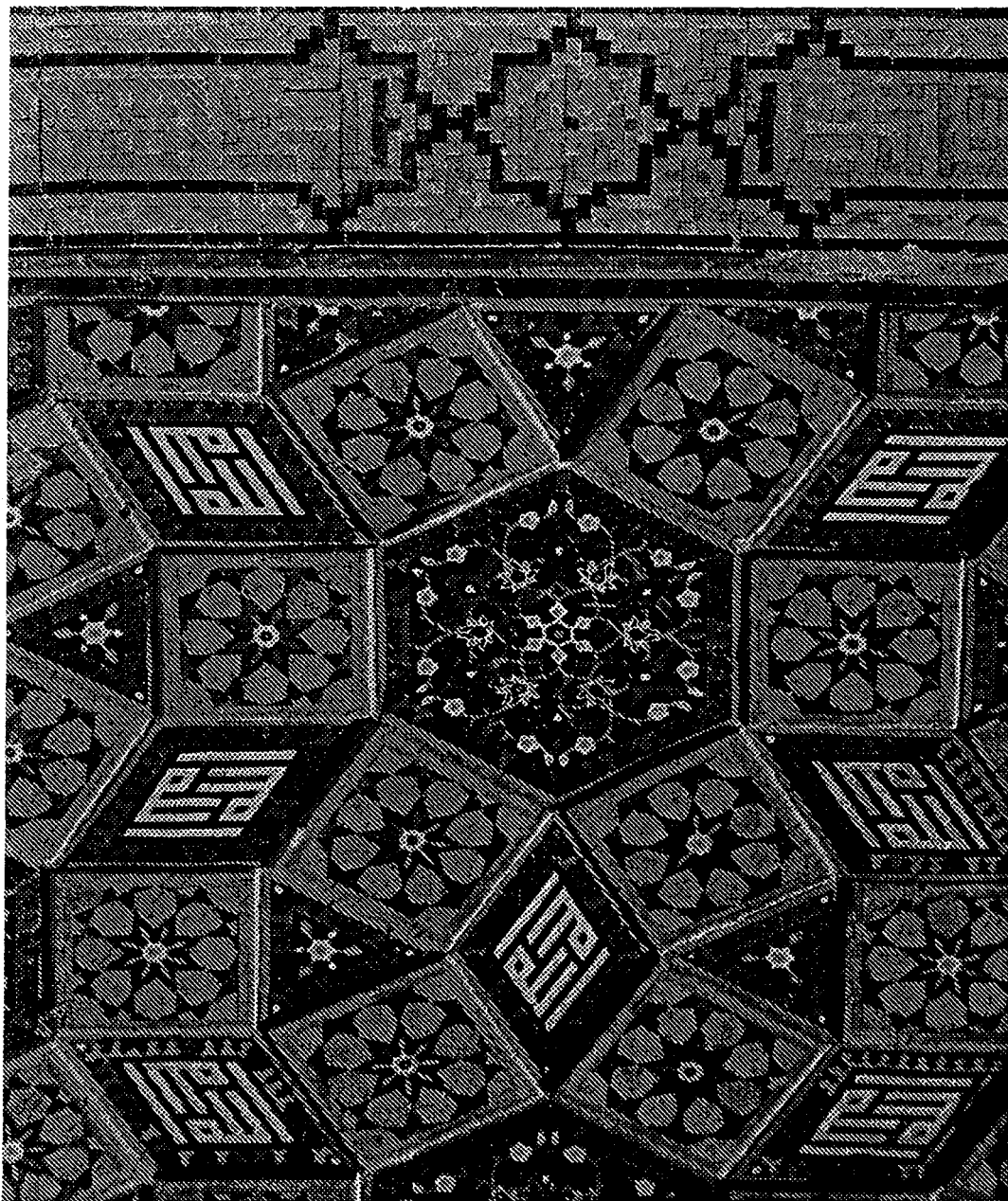


Illustration # 9

Tile mosaic, Wall panel of the shrine of Abdullah Ansari, Gazargah, 1425-29



Illustration # 10 A

frontispieces of *Shahnama*,
Herat, 1425-50. Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, MS 66 A



Illustration # 10 B

frontispieces of *Shahnama*,
Herat, 1425-50. Lisbon, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, MS 66 B

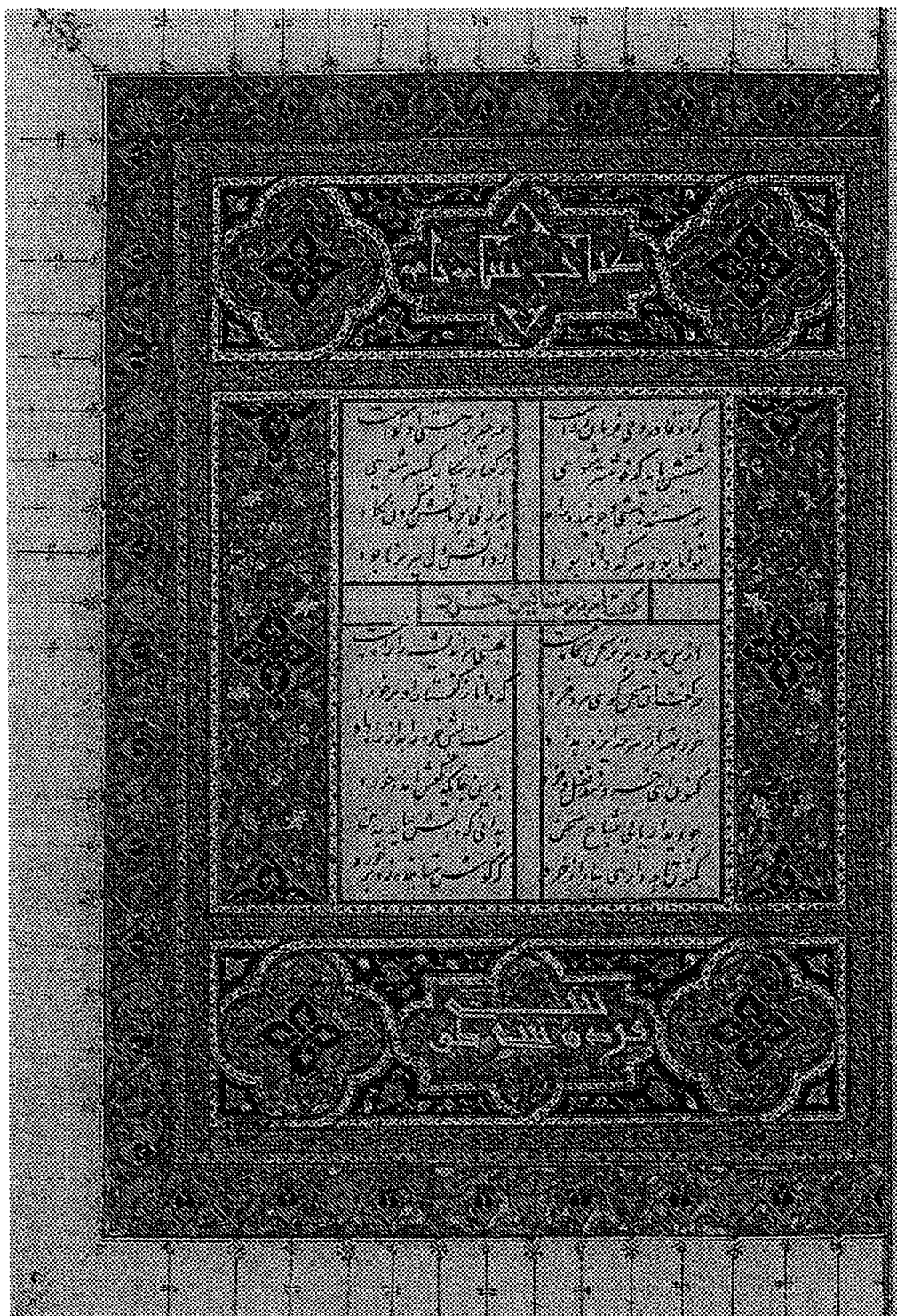


Illustration # 11 A

Shahnama, double-page frontispiece (*dibacha*),
Herat or in the north-east part of Iran, 1440-1450. St. Petersburg, Teaching
Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Cat. no. 2293. Fol. 9v

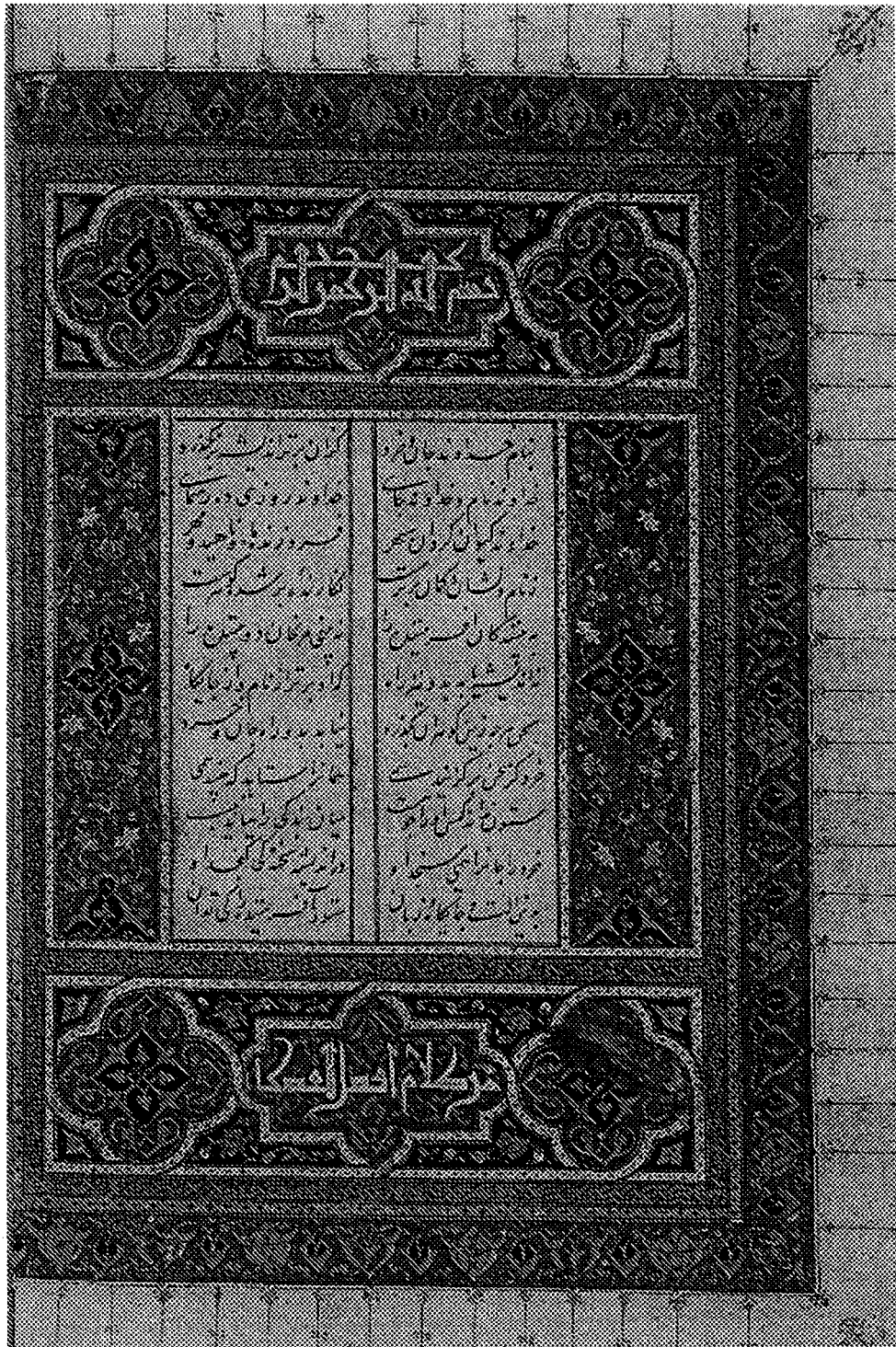


Illustration # 11 B

Shahnama, double-page frontispiece (*dibacha*),
Herat or in the north-east part of Iran, 1440-1450. St. Petersburg, Teaching
Section of Asiatic Department in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Cat. no. 2293. Fol. 10r

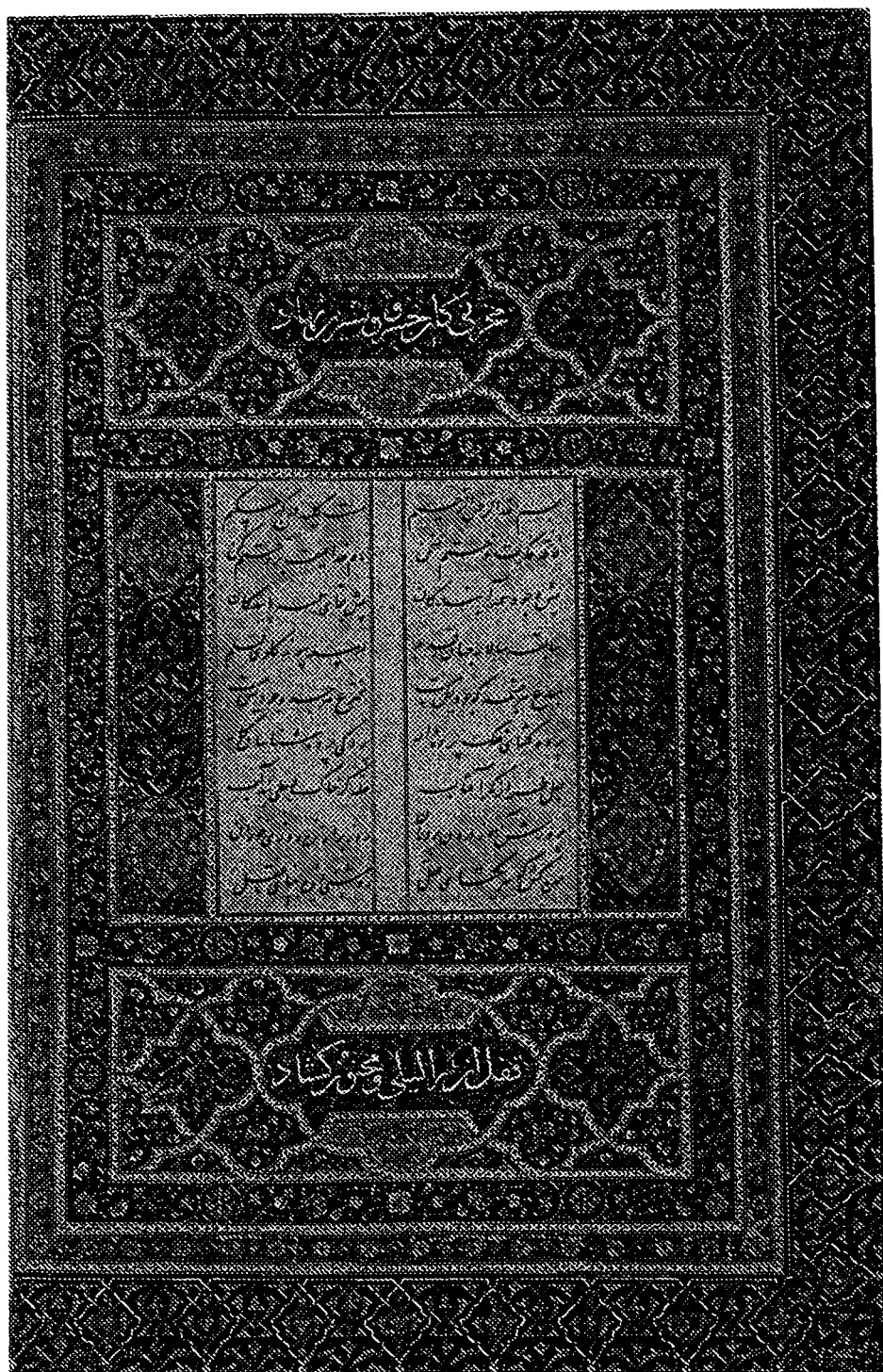


Illustration # 12

Frontispiece of the *Khamsa* of Nizami,
Herat, 1494-95. London, British Library, MS Or. 6810

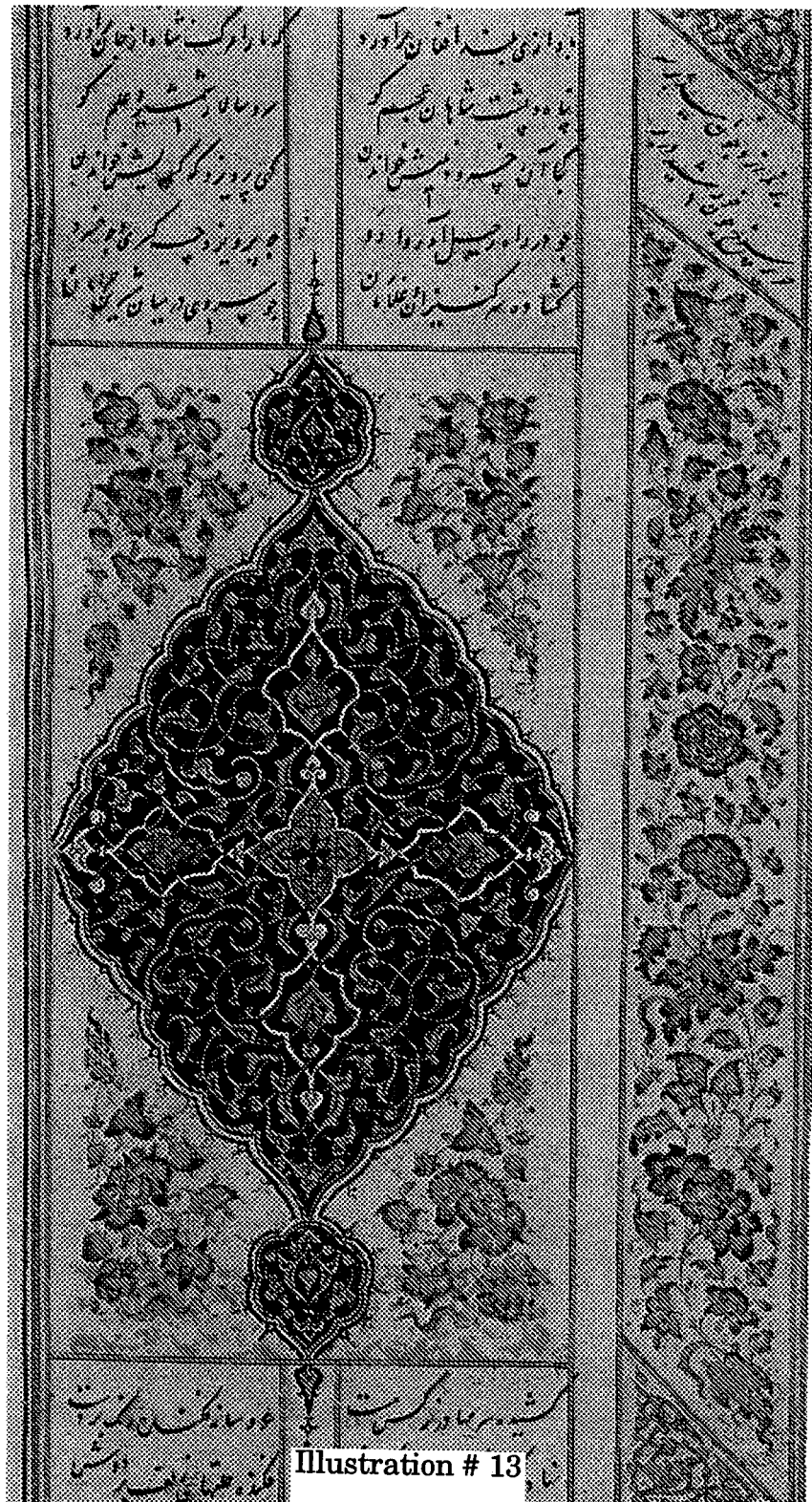


Illustration # 13

*Khamasa of Nizami, Illuminated page, Herat, 1431.
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000*

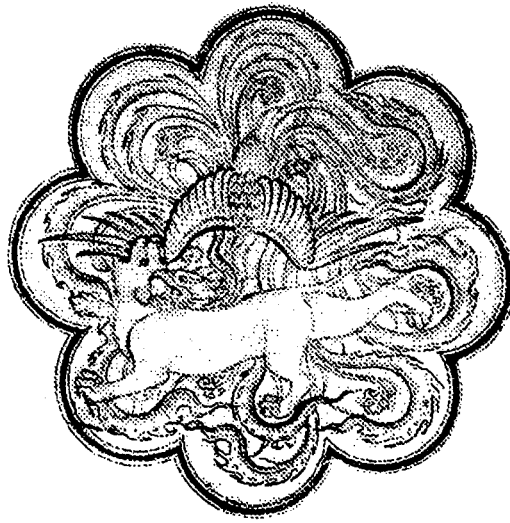


Illustration # 14

Diez album, *Lobed Medallion with Animal Combat*, Iran, 1400-1450. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, f. 73.S.71, #3

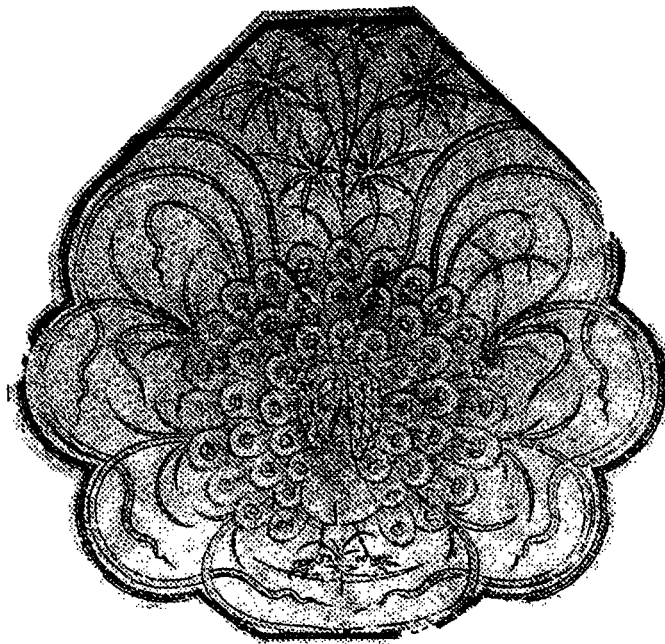


Illustration # 15

Diez album, *Medallion with Peacock*, Iran, 1400-1450. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, f. 73.S.71, #8

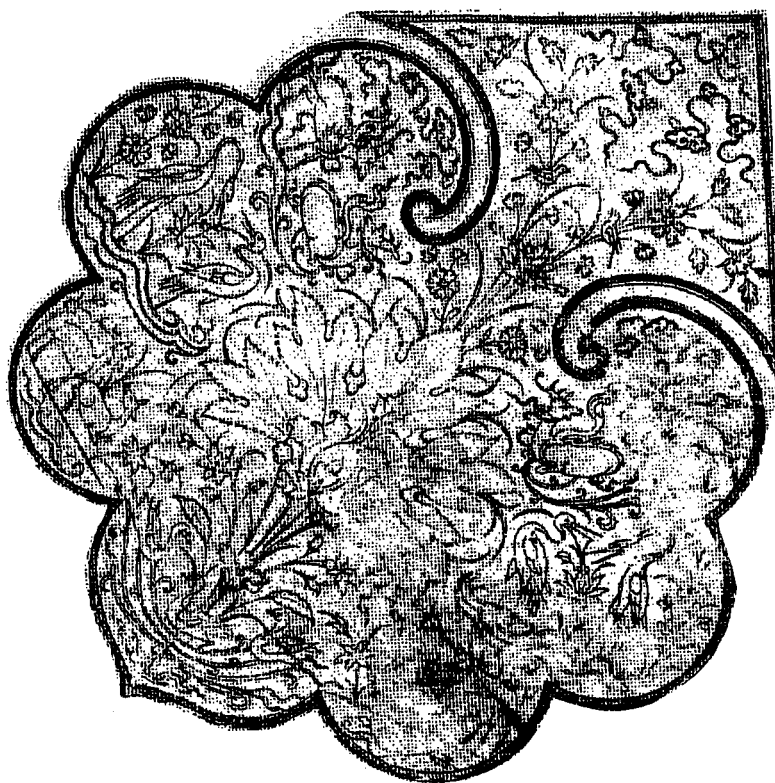


Illustration # 16 A & B

Diez album, *Cloud Collarpoint with Fantastic Plant*, Iran, 1400-1450. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, f. 73.S.67, #3

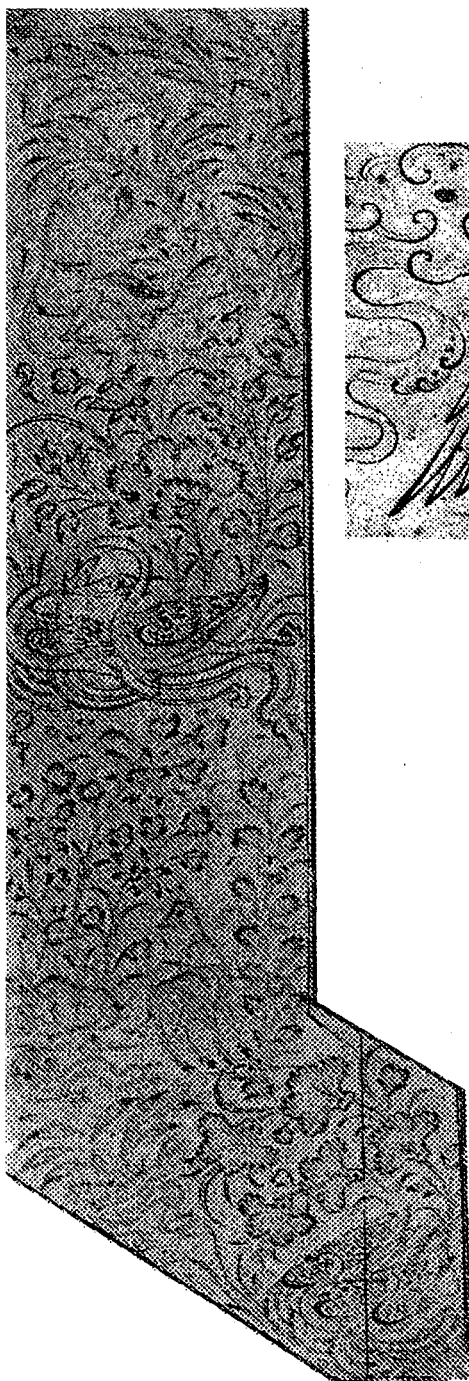


Illustration # 17

Diez album, Design for margin,
Iran, 1400-1450. Berlin,
Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz,
f. 73.S.51, # 1

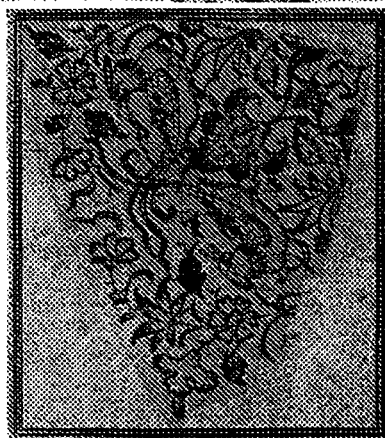


Illustration # 18

Diez album, *Ducks & Floral and Vegetal
Fragment with Birds*, Iran, 1400-1450.
Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer
Kulturbesitz, f. 73.S.43, #6



Illustration # 19 A

Iskandar Begegnet dem Kaiser von China

Herat, 1429. *Dei Miniaturen der Berliner Baisongur-Handschrift*, Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Hs. S. 916

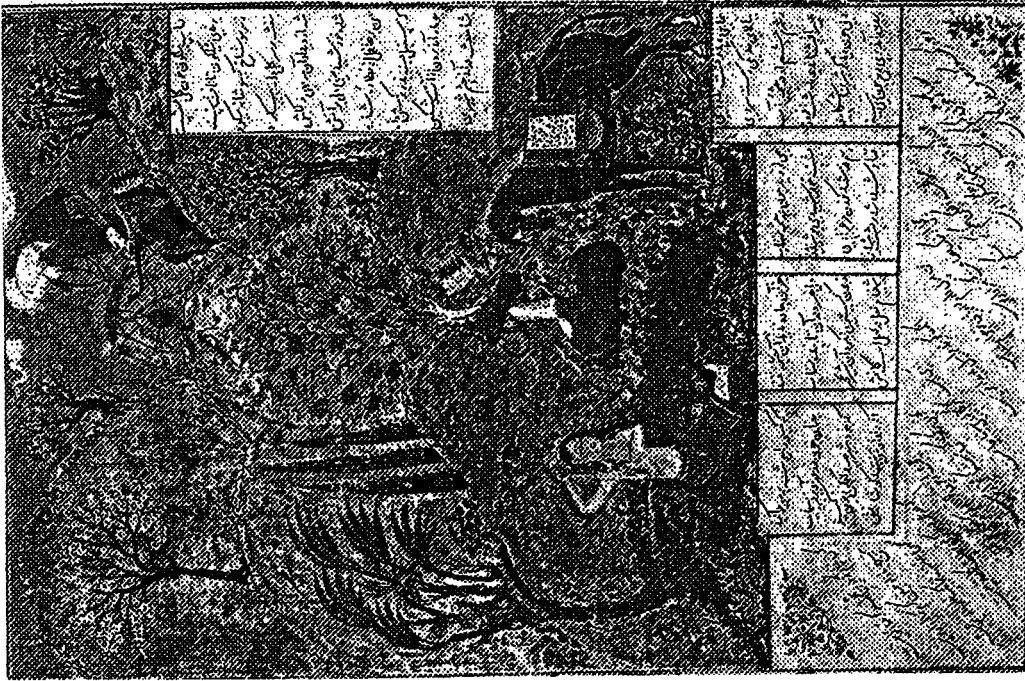


Illustration # 19 B

Chusrau erblickt Schirin Bein Bade

[illegible]

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Arzadasht,
Herat, 1427-28. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H.2153, f.98a



Illustration # 21

Medea Kills Jason's Son Before Him, Histoire de Jason,
ca. 1470. Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS fr. 331, Fol. 139V

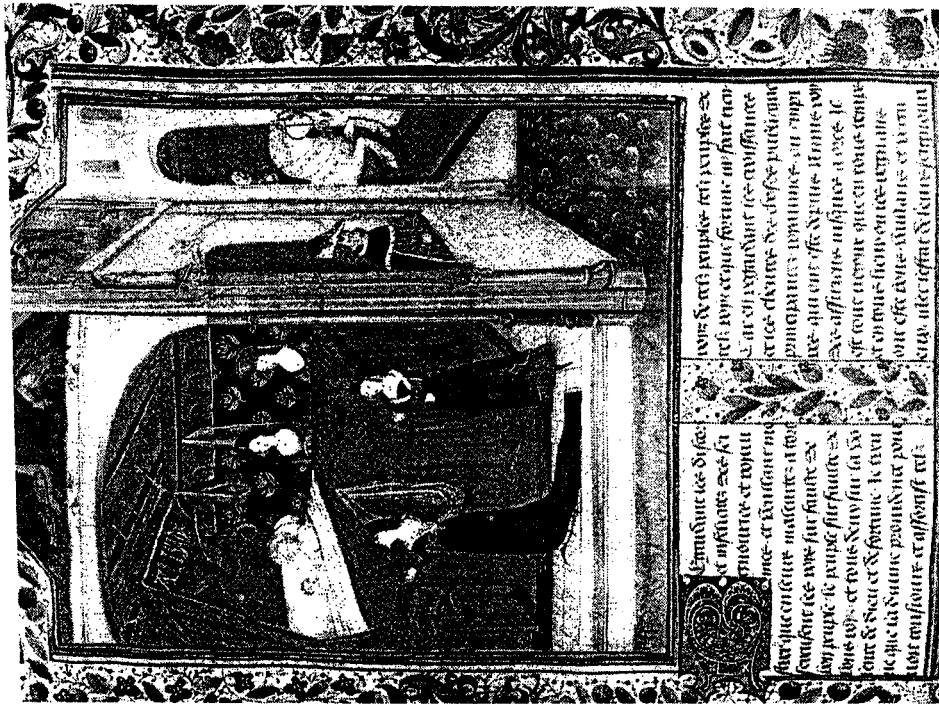


Illustration # 22

Birth of Alexander, ca. 1475. Circle of the
Master of Margaret of York, Cologne,
Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, MS 53 fol. 3r

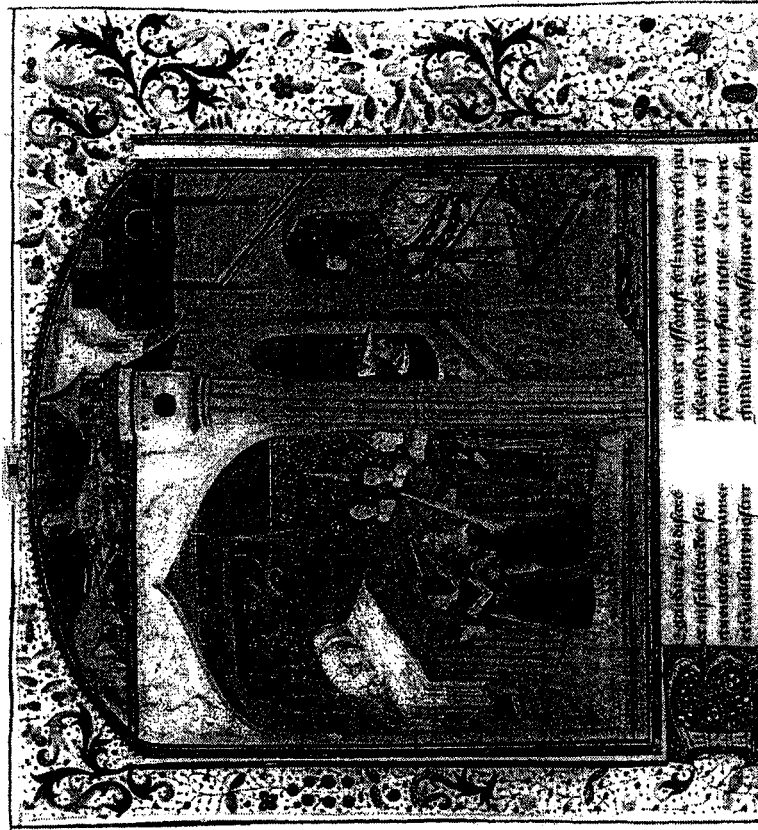


Illustration # 23

Birth of Alexander, ca. 1470-75. Circle of the
Master of Margaret of York, Jena, Thuringer
Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MS El
Fol. 2r



Illustration # 24

Birth of Alexander, ca. 1475. Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, Paris,
Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 257 Fol. 1r



Illustration # 25

Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre, ca. 1470-75. Circle of the Master of Margaret of York, Cologne, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, MS 53, Fol. 38r

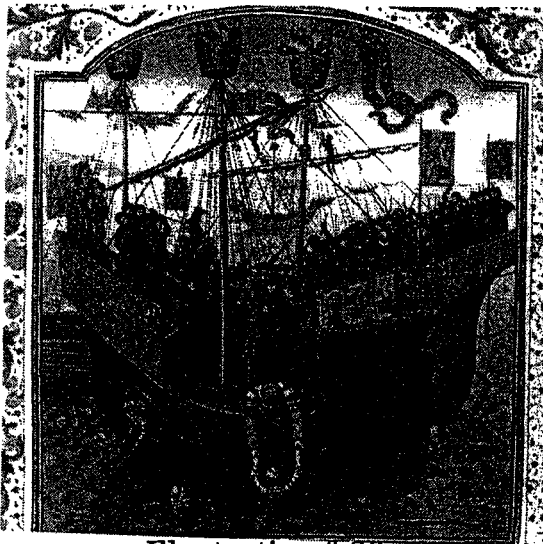


Illustration # 26

Alexander Attacks the City of Tyre, ca. 1475. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS fr. 257 Fol. 39v

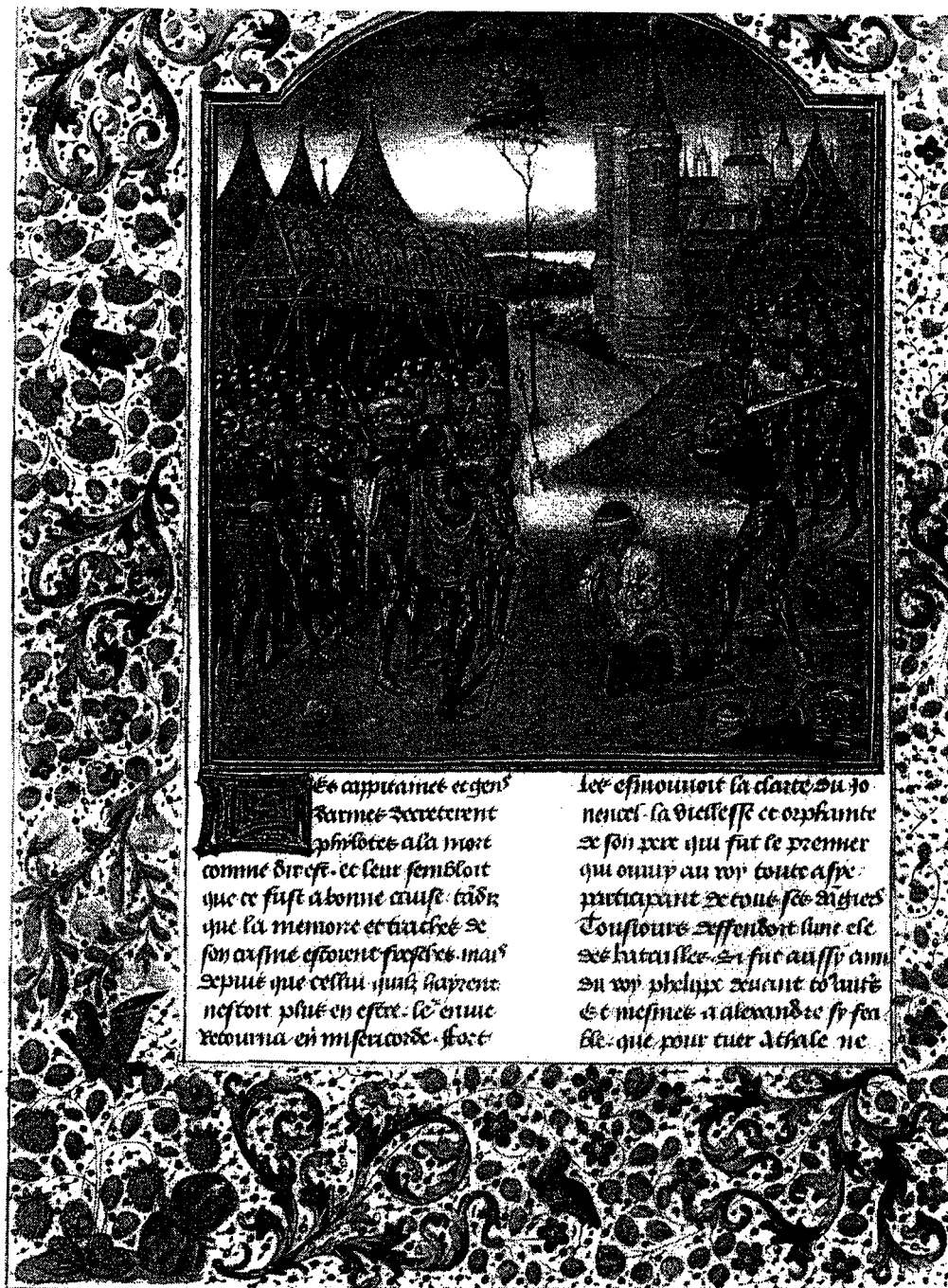


Illustration # 27

Execution of Philotas,
 ca. 1475. Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS fr. 257 Fol. 114v

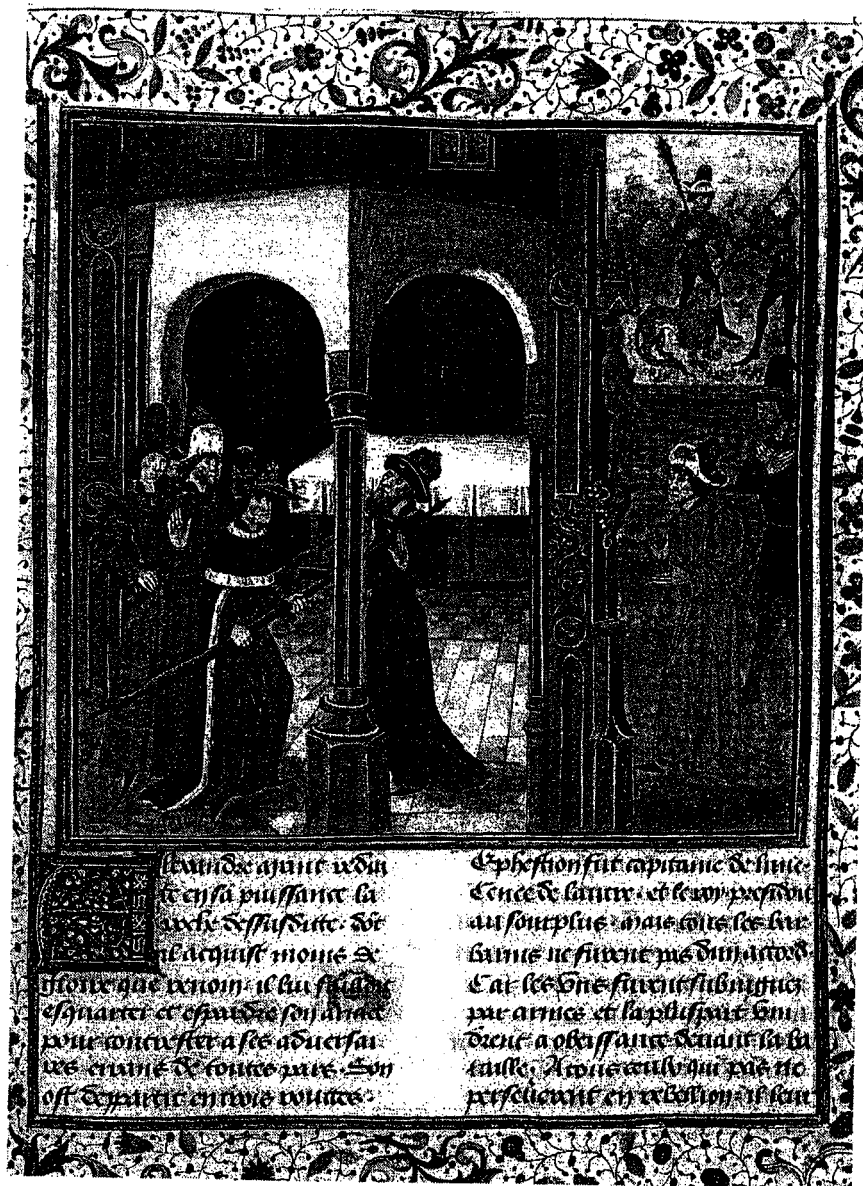


Illustration # 29

Alexander Kills Clitus, ca. 1470-75. Circle of the Master of Margaret of York
 Jena, Thuringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, MS EL Fol. 89r.



Illustration # 30

Diwan of Khawju Kirmani, *Humay Recognizes Hymayun After Their Battle*,
1396. London, British Library, Add.18113 f.23a

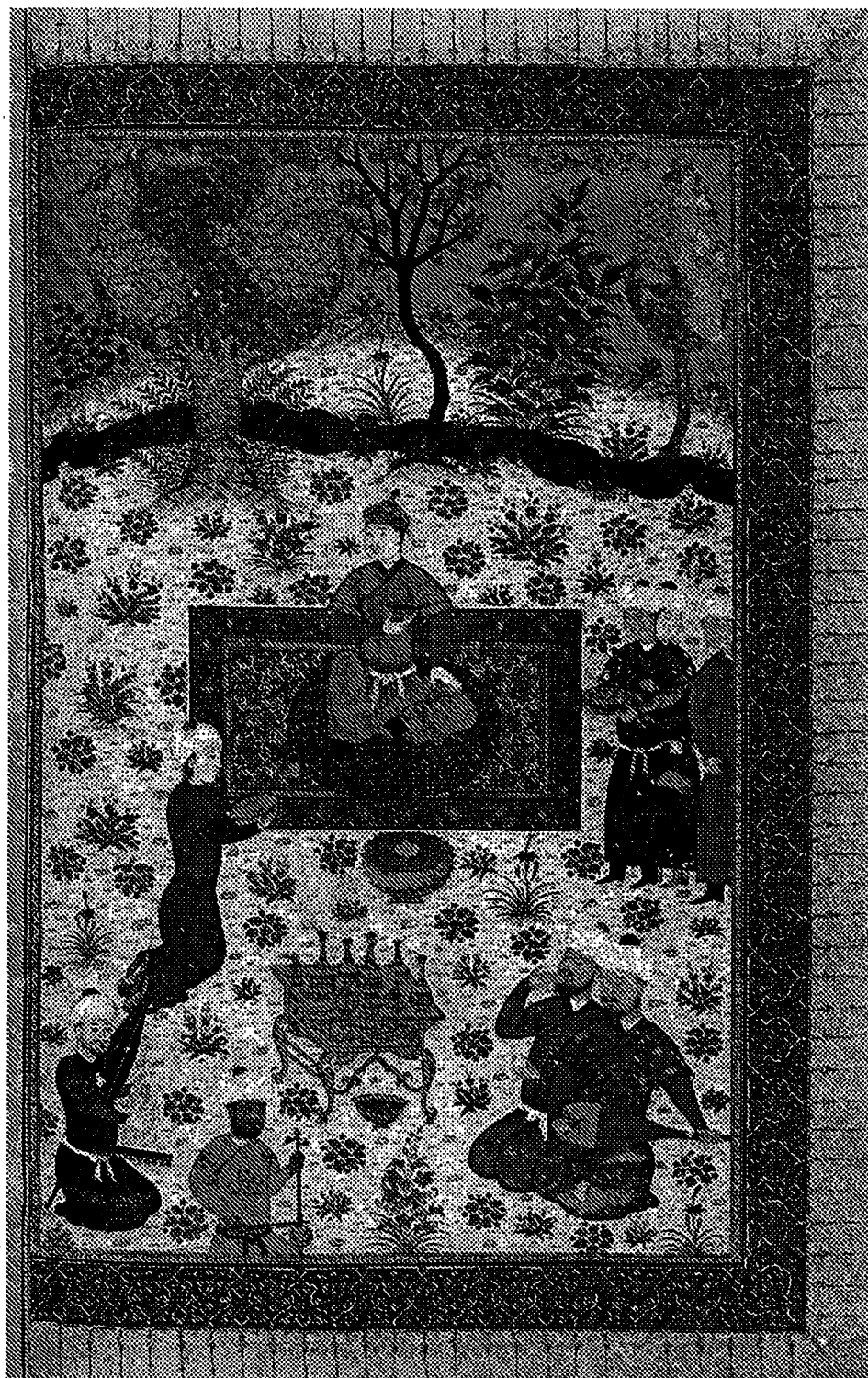


Illustration # 31

Khalia u Dimna, Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh Seated in a Garden,
Herat, 1429. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, R.1022 Fol.2a

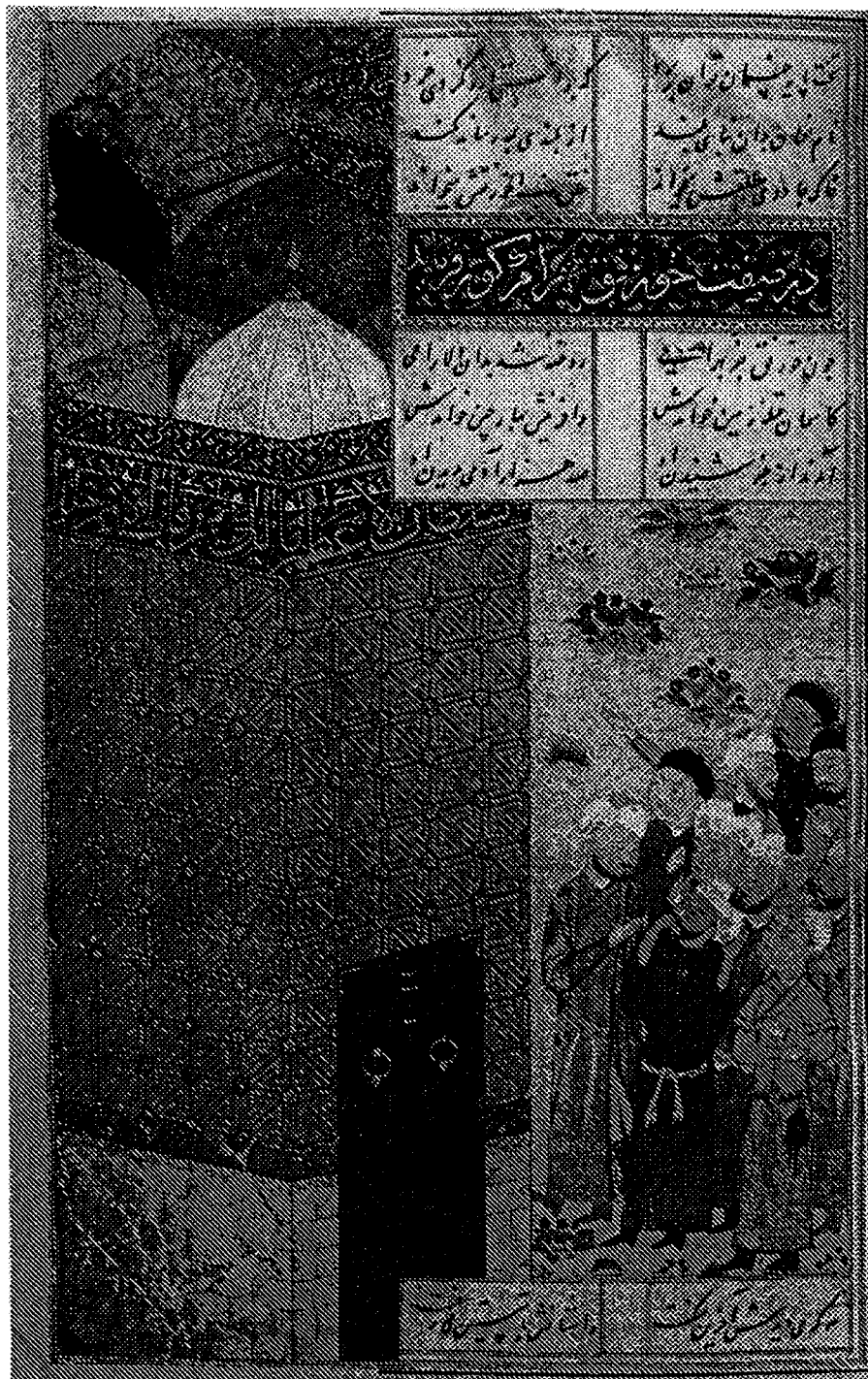


Illustration # 32

Khamsa of Nizami, The Palace of Khawarnaq,
Herat, 1431. St. Petersburg, Hermitage State Library, VR-1000, f.251a



Illustration # 33

Shahnama, Baysunghur ibn Shah Rukh Hunting,
Herat, 1430. Tehran, Gulistan Palace Library, No.61

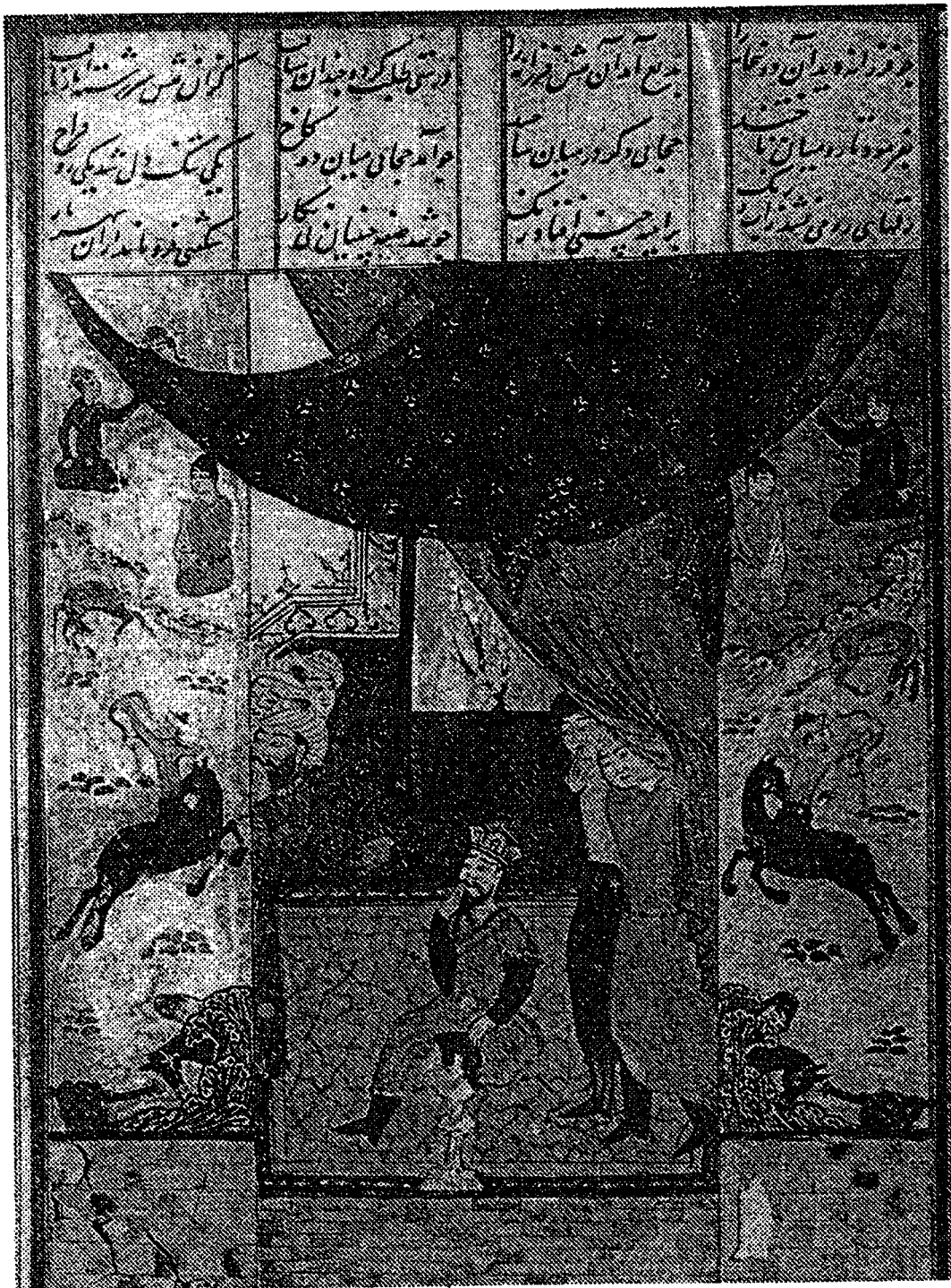


Illustration # 34

Khamsa of Nizami, Iskandar Judges the Greek and Chinese Painting, 1449-50. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913. MS.13.228.3 Fol.322a



Illustration # 35

Khamsa of Nizami, Iskandar Inspects His Own Portrait,
before 1449. Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Museum Library, MS.870 Fol.235b

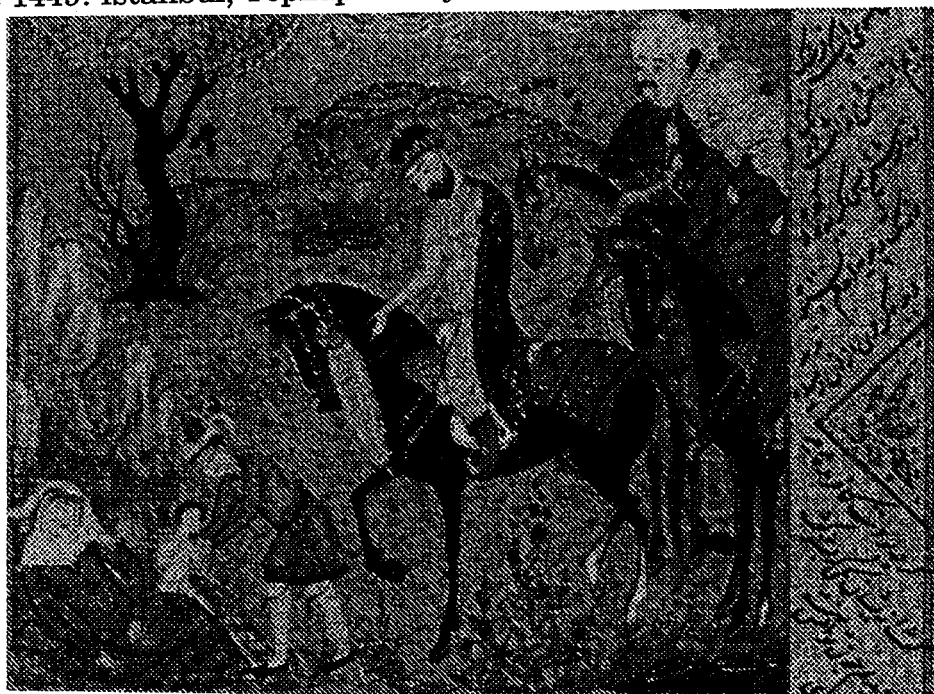


Illustration # 36

Khamsa of Nizami, Birth of Alexander,
ca. 1505. London, The Indian Office Library, MS.387 Fol.306b

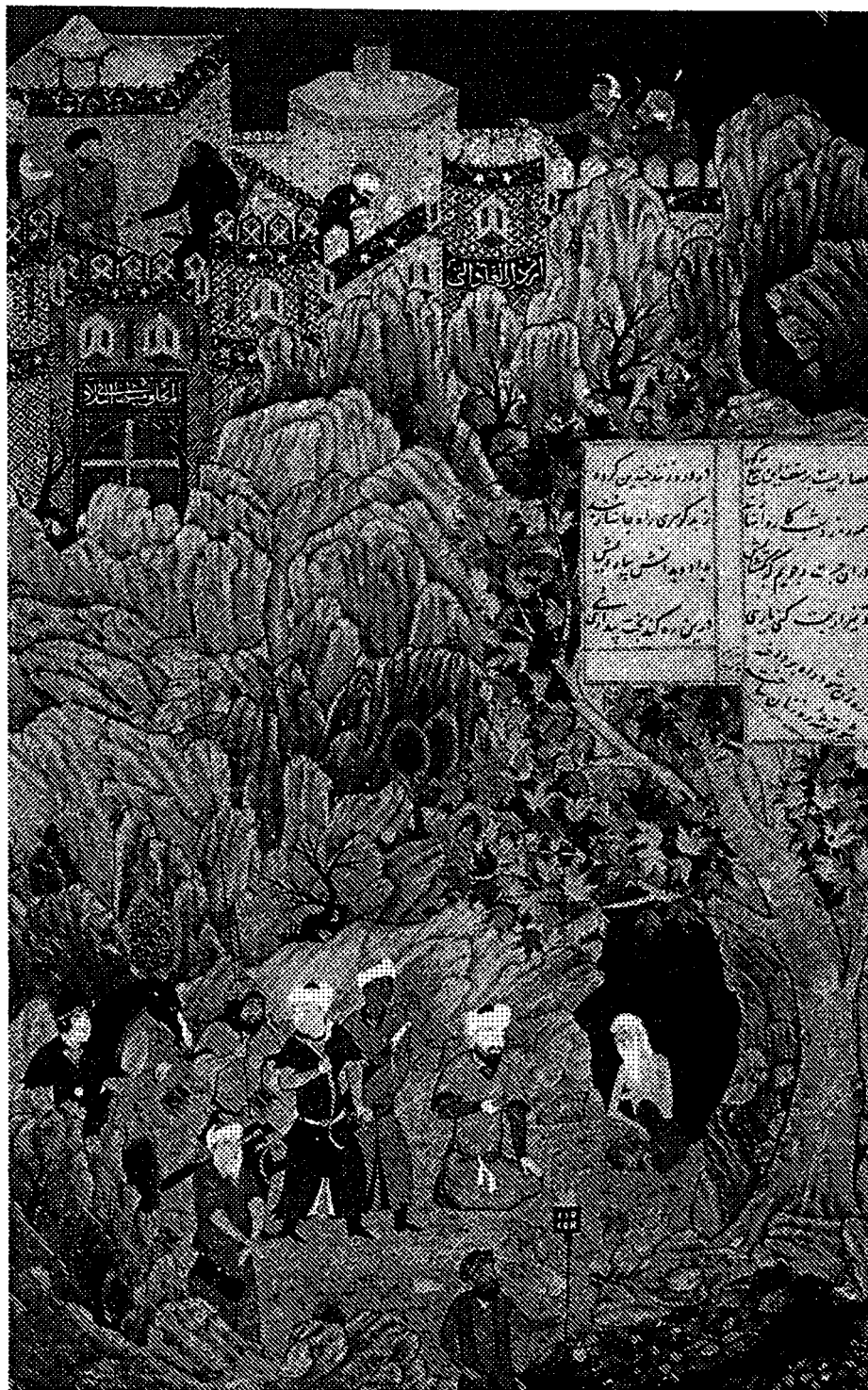


Illustration # 37

Khamisa of Nizami, Iskandar Visiting the Hermit,
 Herat, 1494. London, British Library,
 Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or.6810 Fol.273a

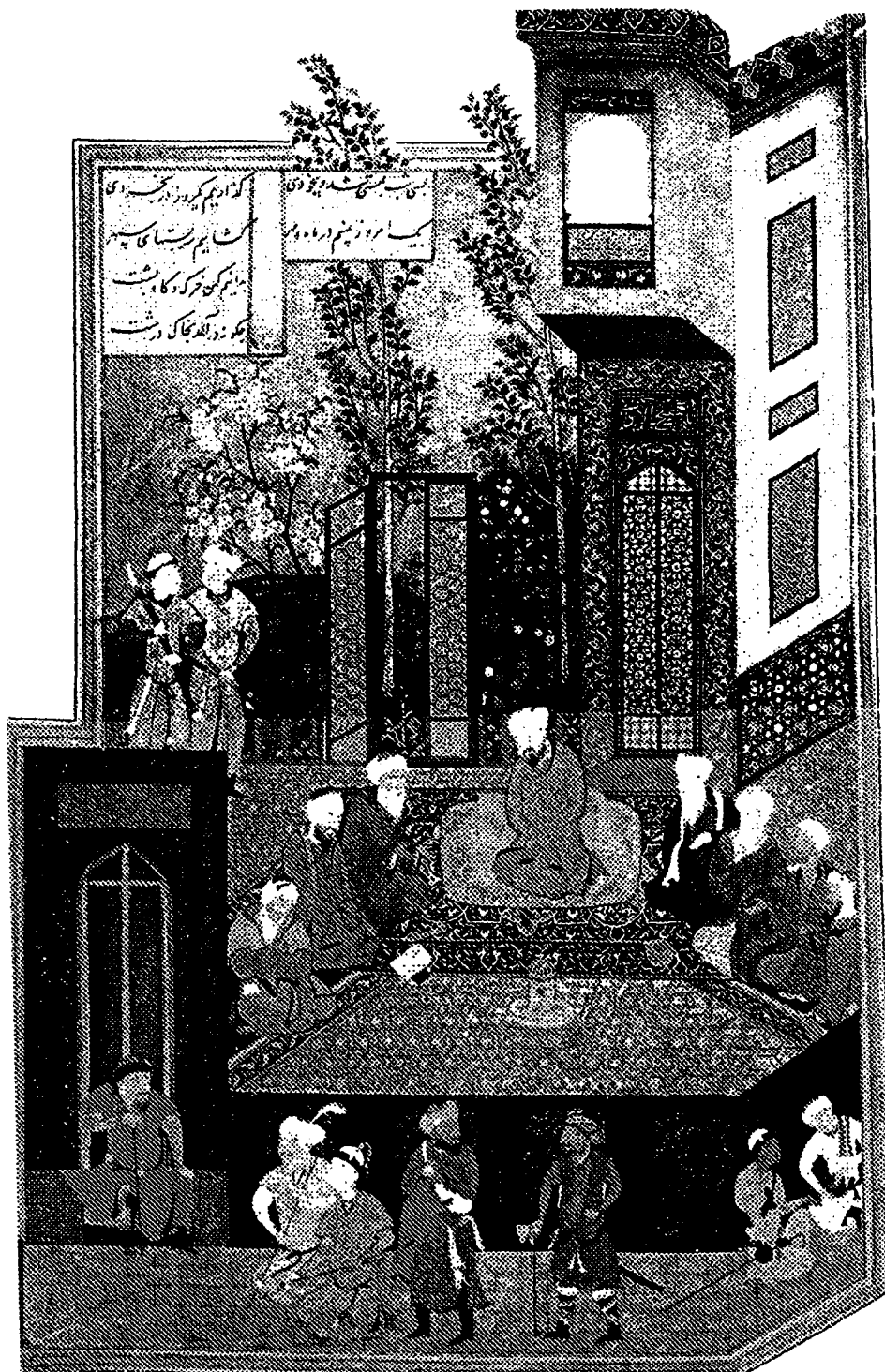


Illustration # 38

Khamasa of Nizami, Iskandar and the Seven Sages,
Herat, 1494-95. London, British Library,
Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or.6810 Fol.214r

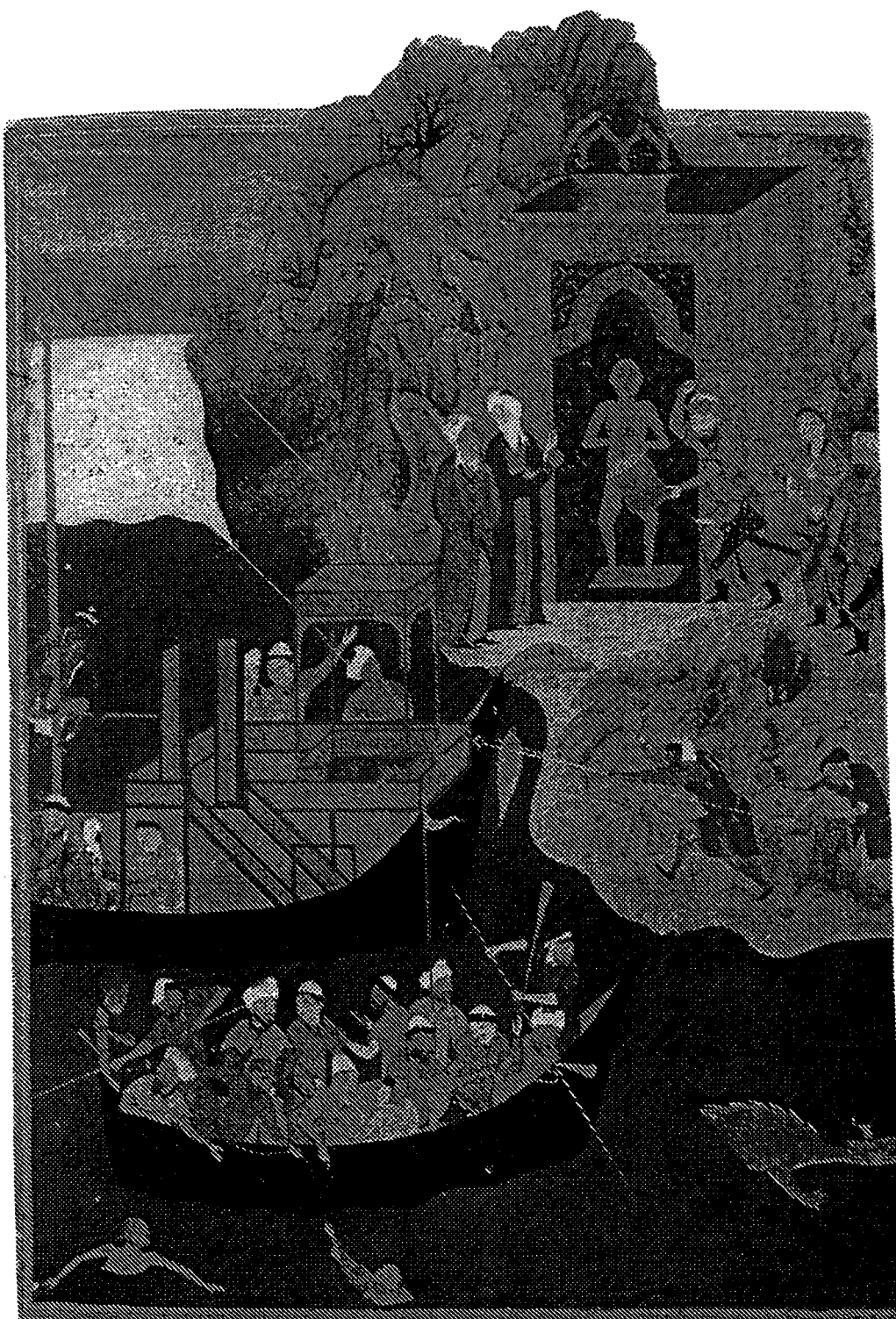


Illustration # 39

Khamisa of Nizami, *Iskandar Beating the Drum to Repel the Sea Monsters*,
Herat, 1494. London, British Library,
Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or.6810 Fol.225v



Illustration # 40

Khamsa of Nizami, Victory of Iskandar Over the Zangi,
1444-45. Manchester, The John Rylands University Library, MS.36 Fol.218b

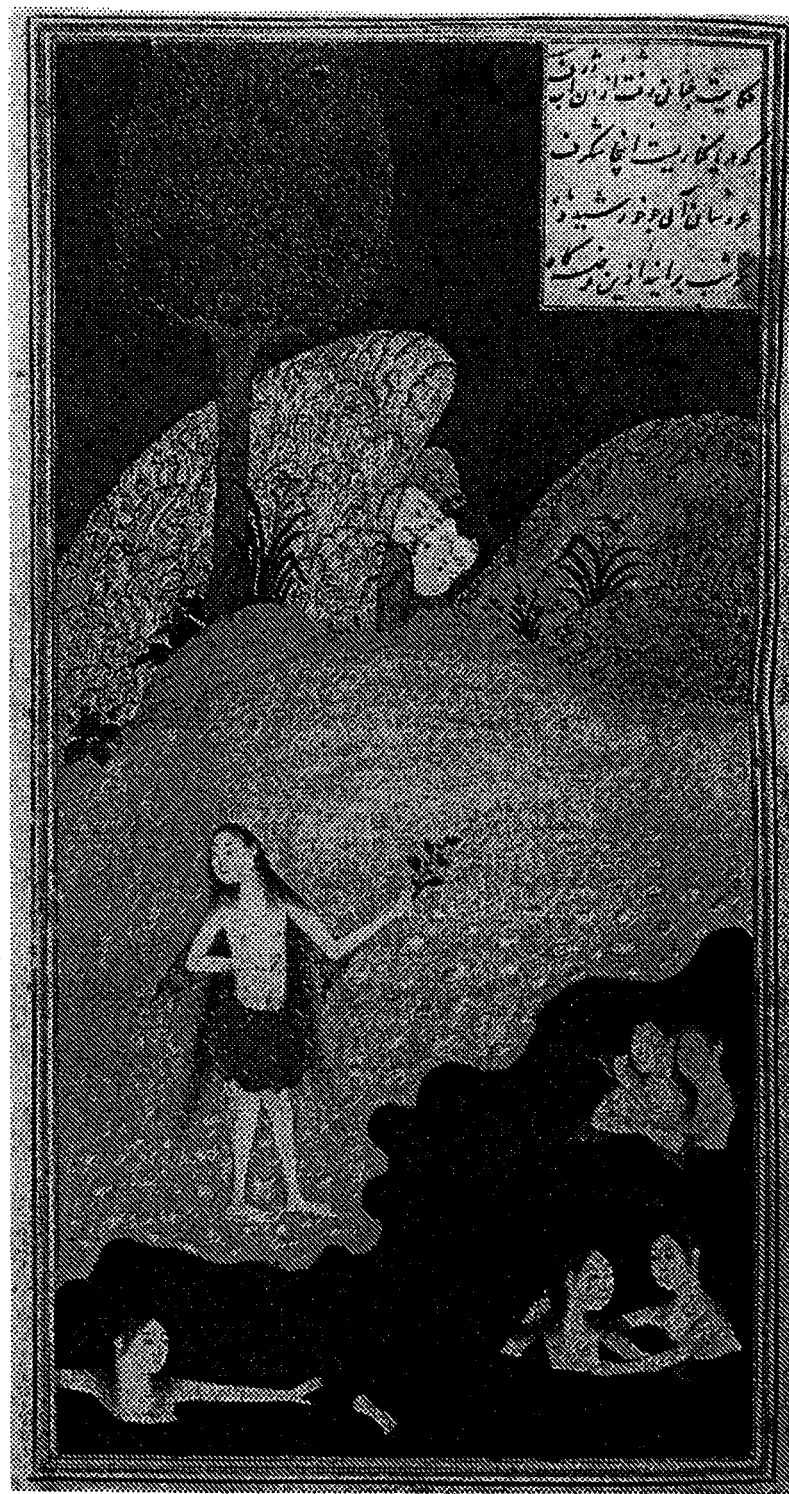


Illustration # 41

Khamse of Nizami, *Iskandar and the Sirens*,
Herat, 1431. St. Petersburg, Hermitage State Library, Cat. 38 Fol.484a



Illustration # 42

Khamisa of Nizami, *Battle Between Iskandar and Dara*,
Herat, ca. 1493. London, British Museum,
Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Add. 25900 Fol.231v

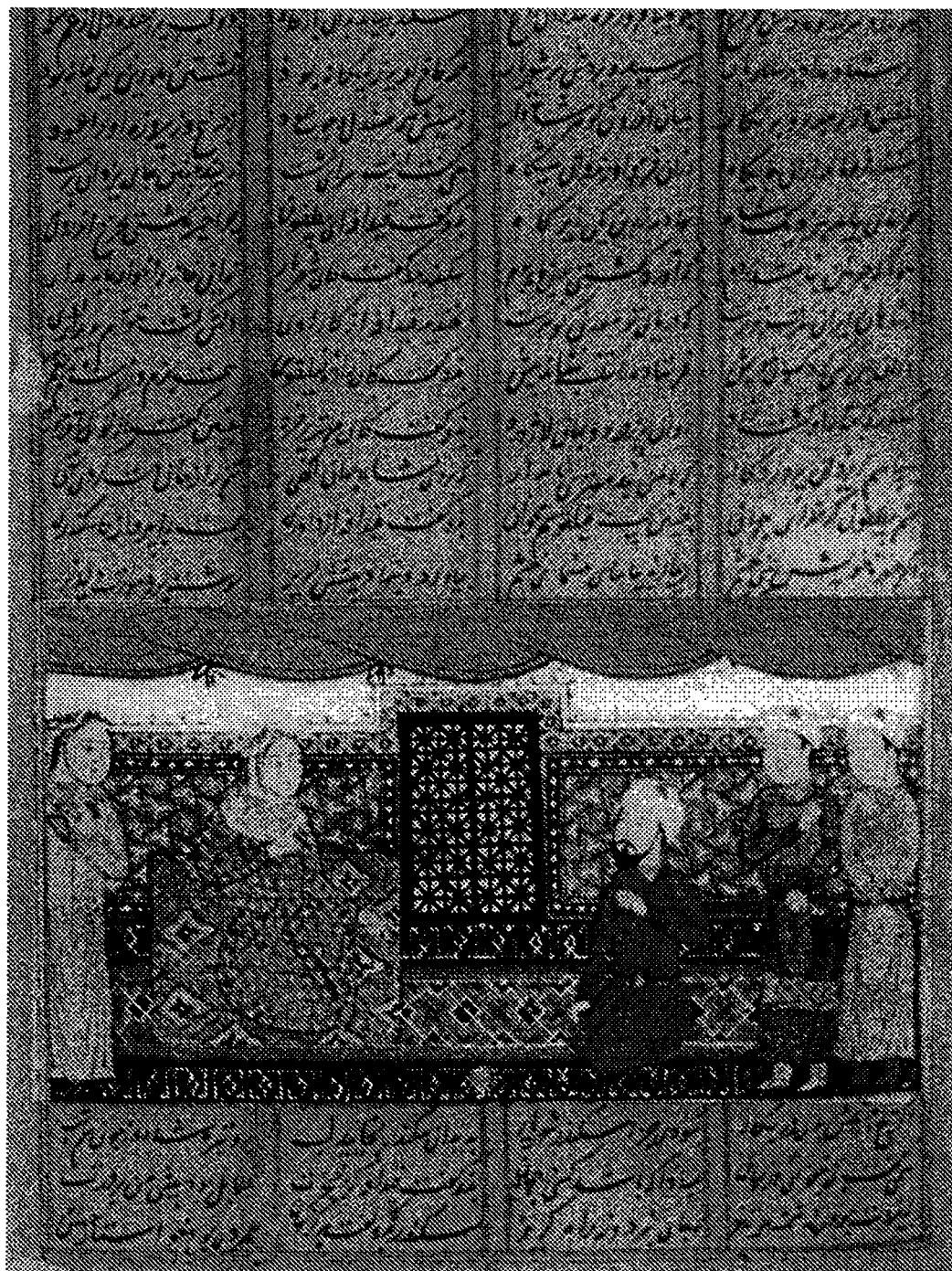


Illustration # 43

Shahnama, Nushaba Recognising Iskandar Who is Disguised as Merchant,
 1437. London, British Museum,
 Department of Oriental Manuscripts, MS.1437 Fol.323a



Illustration # 44

Shahnama, Alexander Comforting Dying Dara,
ca. 1440-45. London, Royal Asiatic Society, MS. 239 Fol.313b



Illustration # 44 A

Khamsa of Nizami, *Alexander Weds the Daughter of Darius III*, Iran, Fifteenth century. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913, 13.228.9 Fol. 209 b.

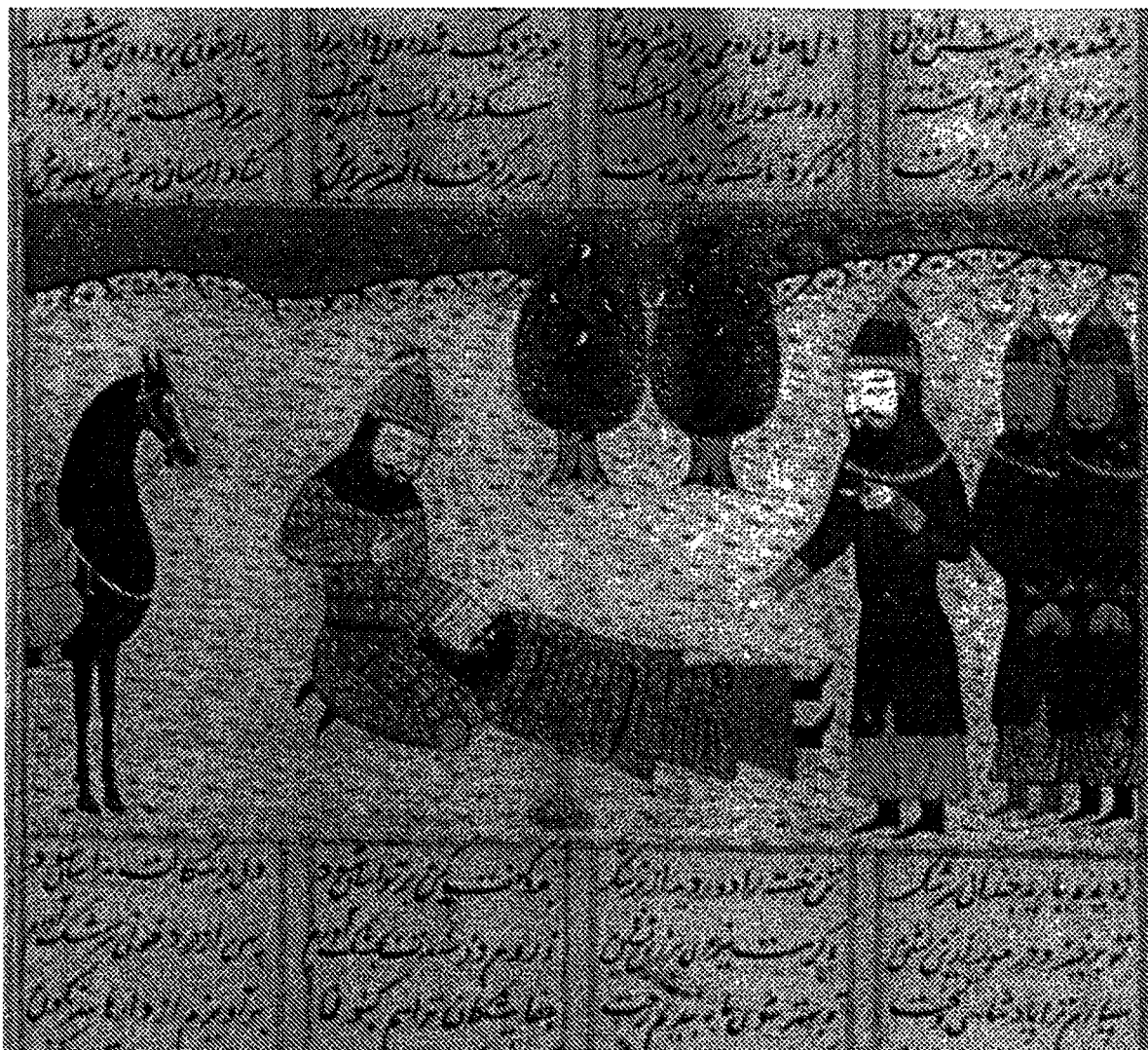


Illustration # 45

Shahnama, Alexander Comforting Dying Dara with the Treacherous Officers, Mahiyar and Janusiyar Held Prisoners Near By, 1437. London, British Museum, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or. 1403 Fol.313b



Illustration # 46

Shahnama, Alexander Executes Janusiyar and Mahiyar, the Slave of Darius, Iran, 1482. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913, 40.38.1

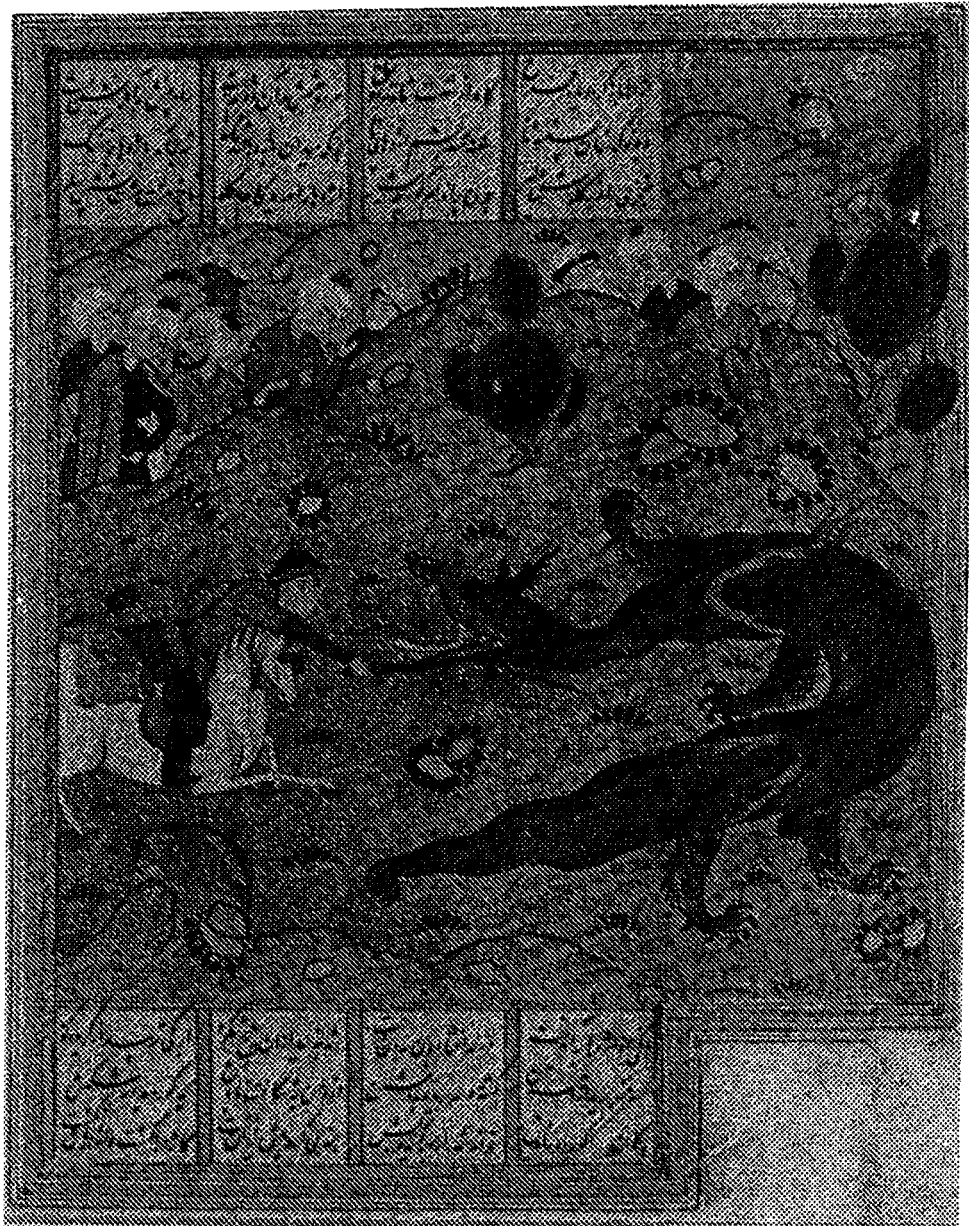


Illustration # 47

Shahnama, Alexander the Great Slaying a Dragon,
Herat, Ca. 1450. New York, J. Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 847

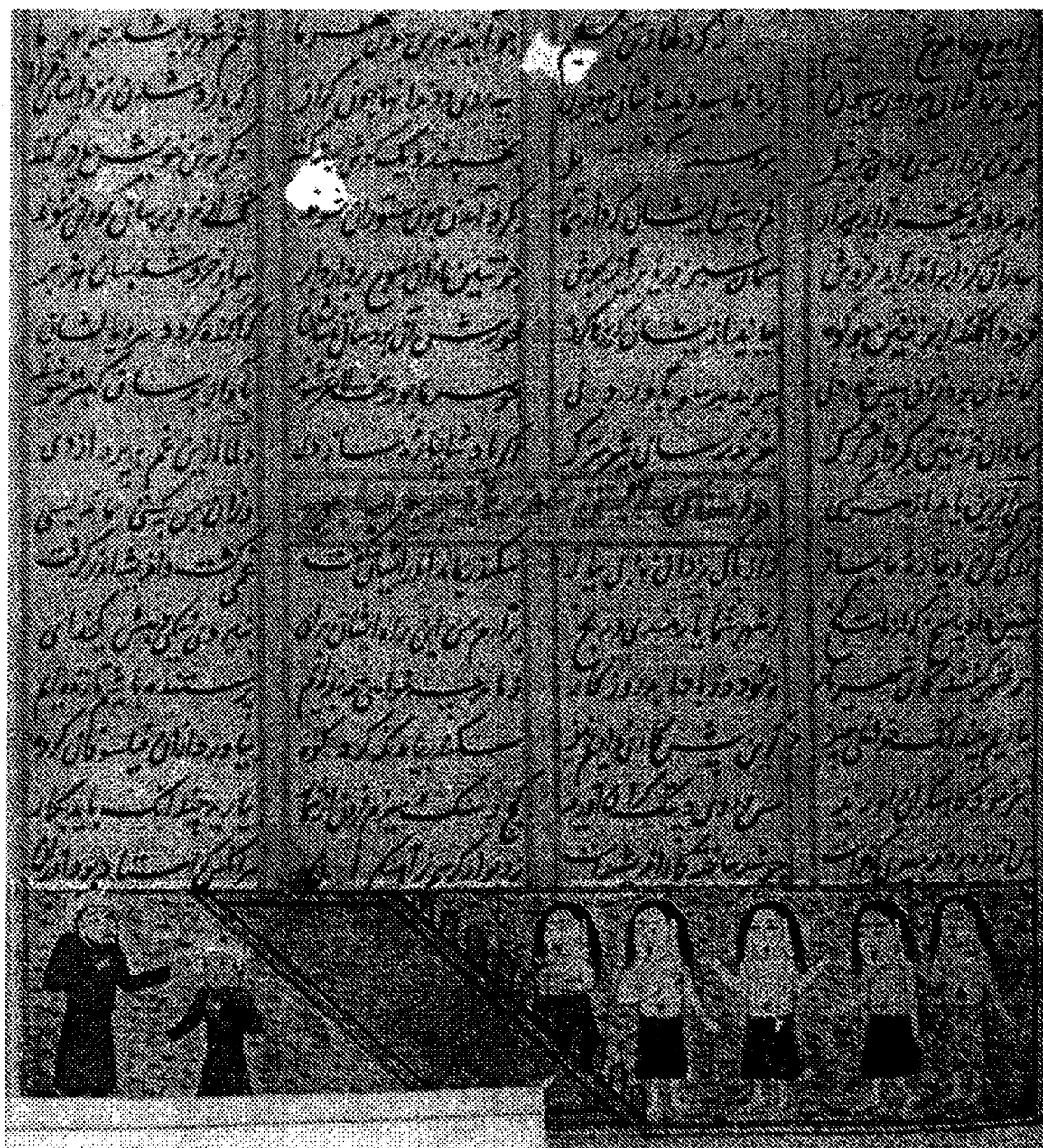


Illustration # 48 A

Shahnama, Iskandar at the Wall of the Land of Juj and Majuj (Gog and Magog), 1437. London, British Museum, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or.1403 Fol.329a

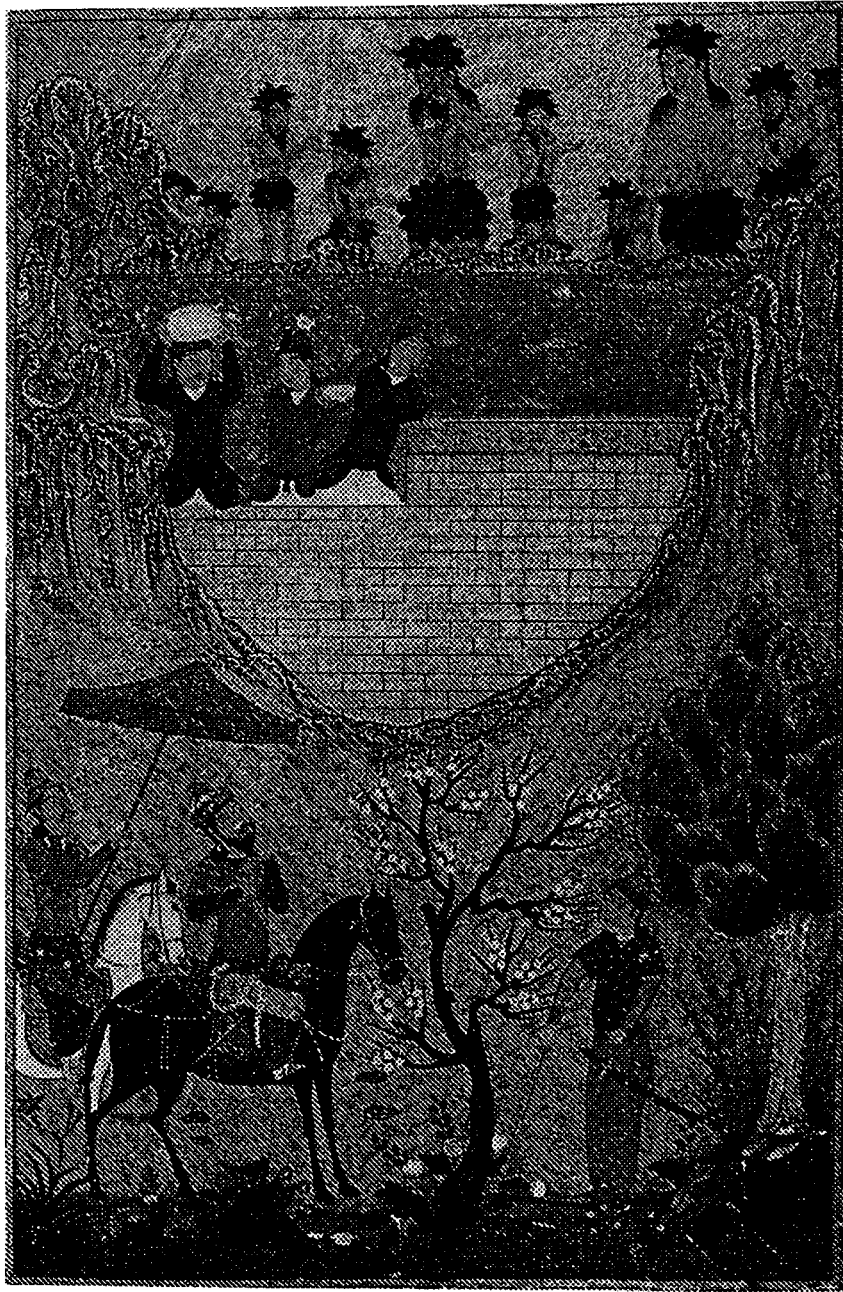


Illustration # 48 B

Shahnama, Iskandar Builds the Wall to Dam the Gog and Magog, Yazd, 1407. Poetic Anthology, Istanbul, Topkapi Sarayi Library, H.796

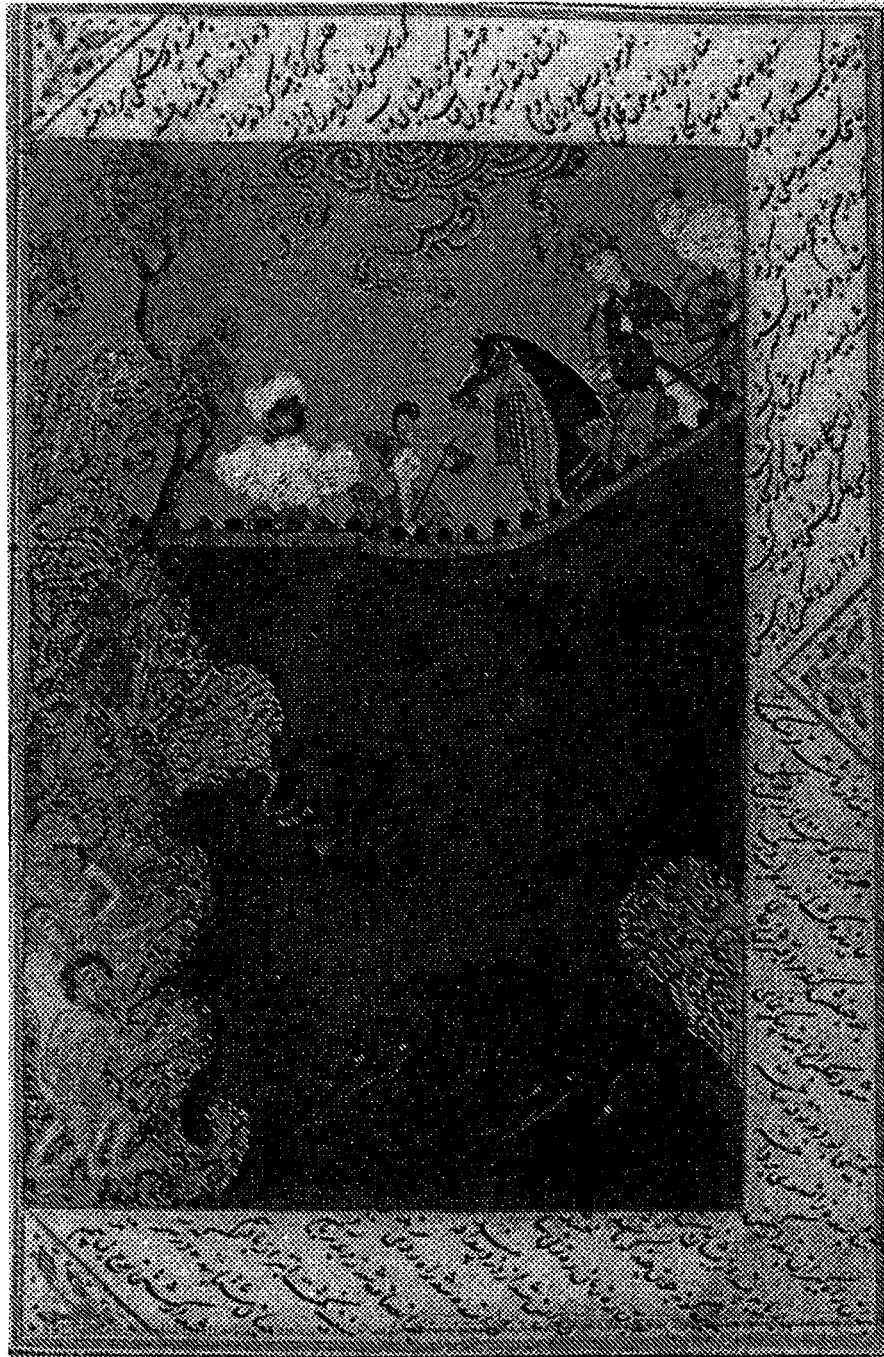


Illustration # 48 C

Shahnama, Iskandar's Wall Against Gog and Magog,
 ca. 1505. London, The India Office library, Or.1403 Fol.329a

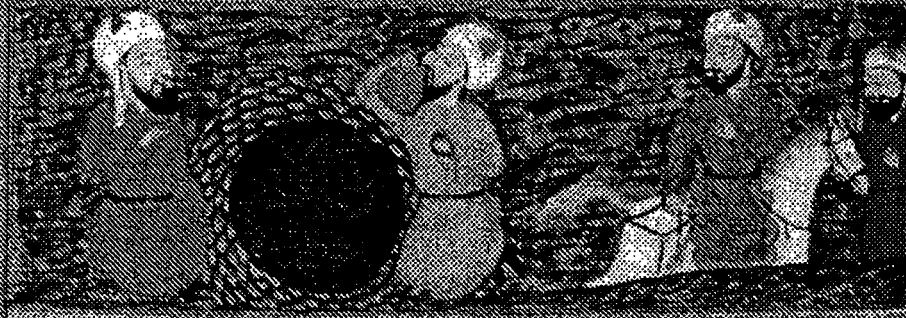
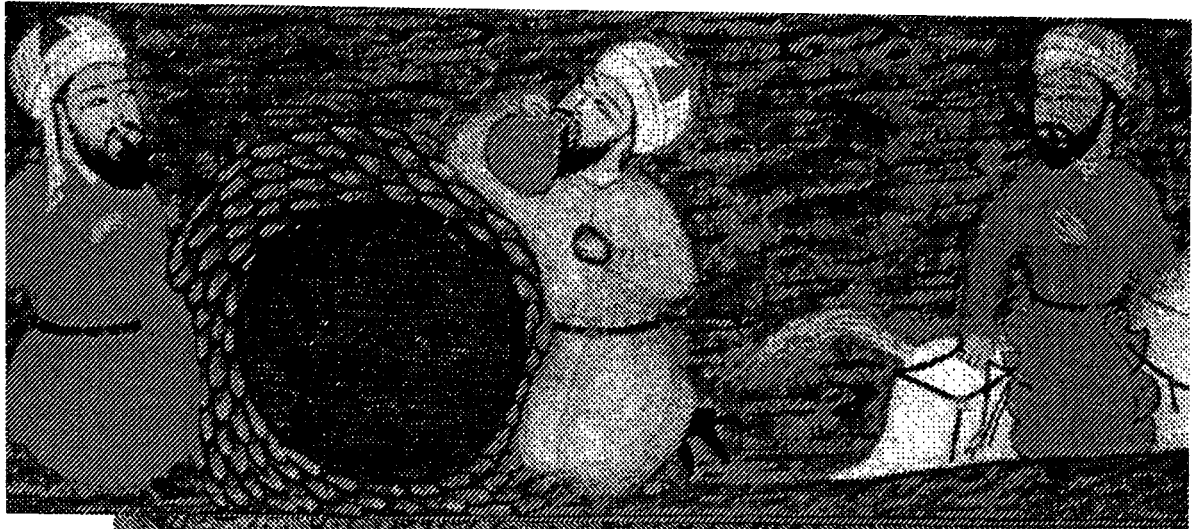


Illustration # 49 A & B

Shahnama, Khadir Drinking From Water of Life Watched By Iskandar,
 1437. London, British Museum,
 Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or. 1403 Fol. 328a & Fol. 328r.



Illustration # 50 A

Shahnama, Iskandar Killing Fur in Battle, 1437. London, British Museum, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Or. 1403 Fol. 320a



Illustration # 50 B

Shahnama, Iskandar Killing Fur in Battle, 1437. London, British Museum, Department of Oriental Manuscripts, Add. 18188 Fol. 317b

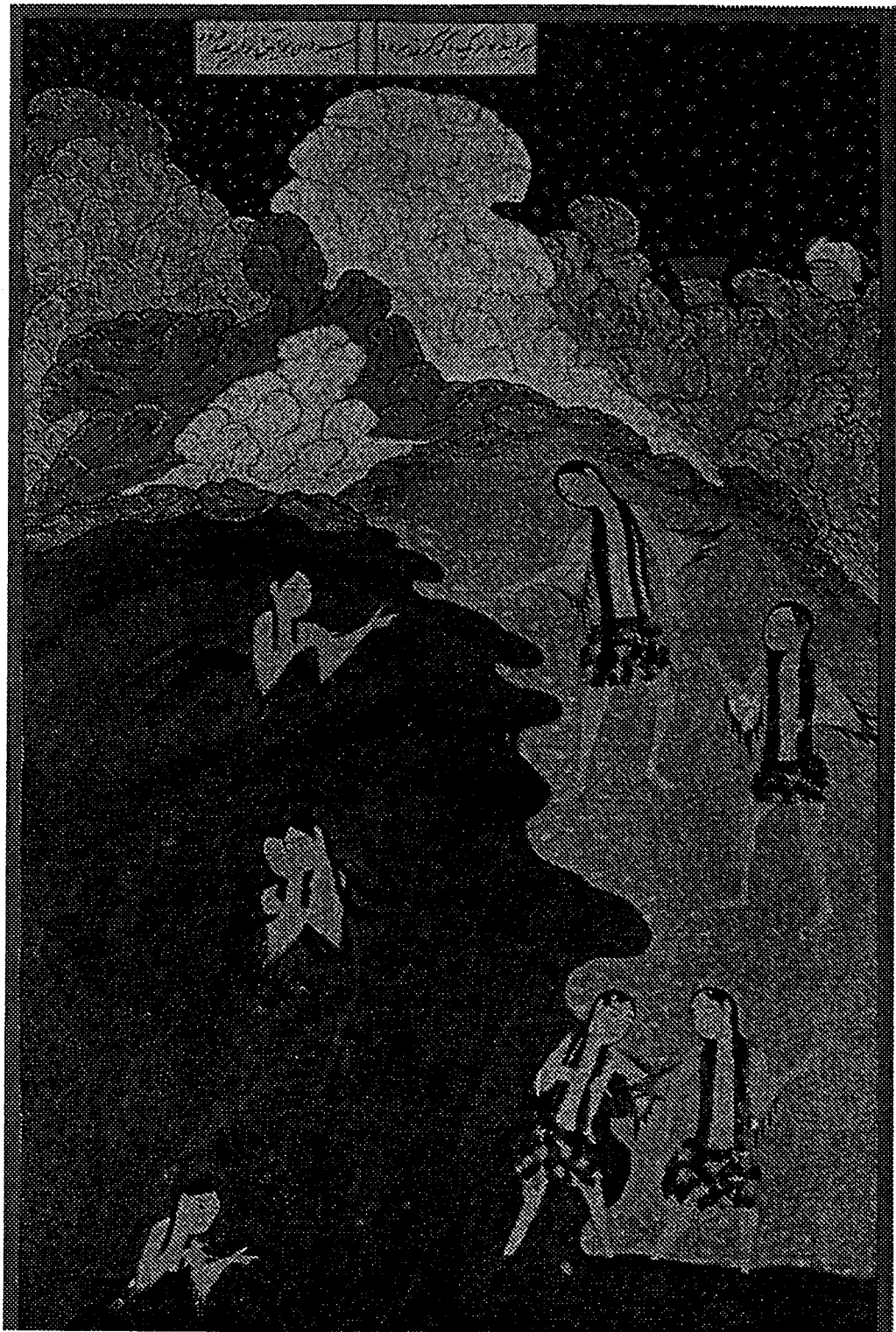


Illustration # 51

Khamṣa of Nizami, *Iskandar and the Sirens*, Shiraz, 1410.
St. Petersburg, Hermitage State Library, VR-1000



Illustration # 52

Dara Flieht vor Iskandar, Shiraz,
1420. Berlin, Islamic department, Staatliche Museen, I.4628, f.432

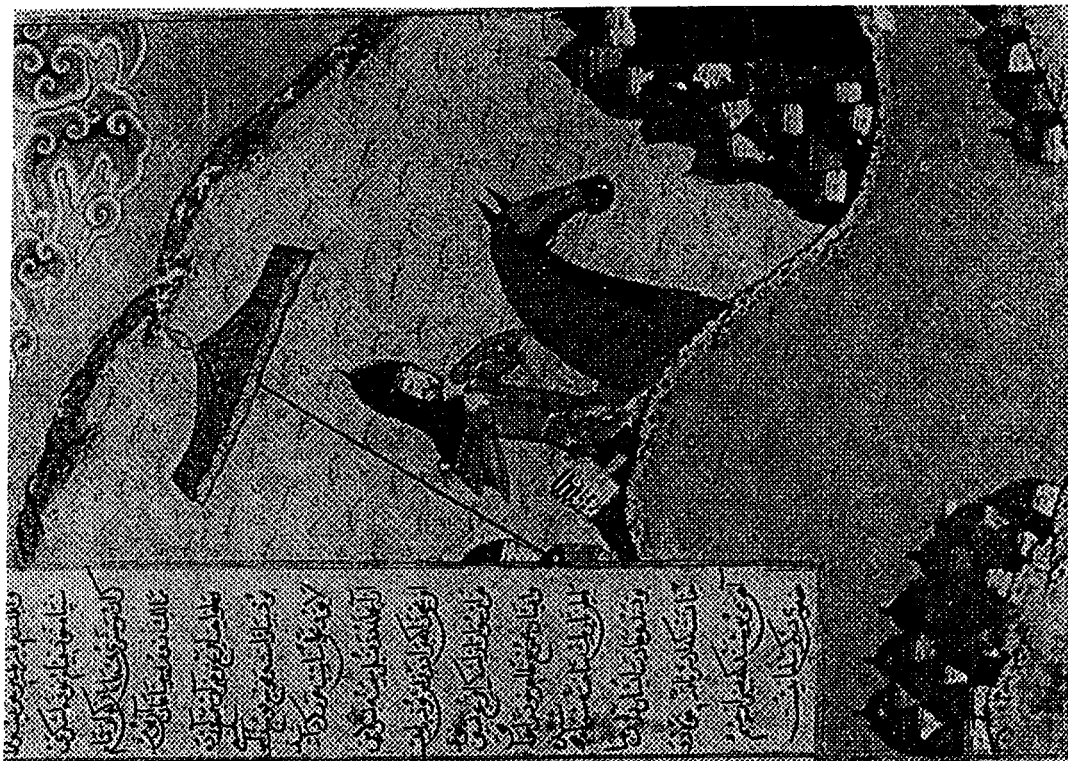


Illustration # 53



Illustration # 54

Zafarnama, History of Timur, for Ibrahim Sultan, 1436. Jerusalem, Meyer Memorial Institute for Islamic Art



Illustration # 55

Khamisa of Nizami, *Nushaba Recognizing Iskandar*,
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, Cat. no. 38, VR-1000



Illustration # 56

Khamsa of Nizami, The Battle of Iskandar and Dara,
1525. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Gift of Alexander Smith Cochran, 1913, 13.228.7

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